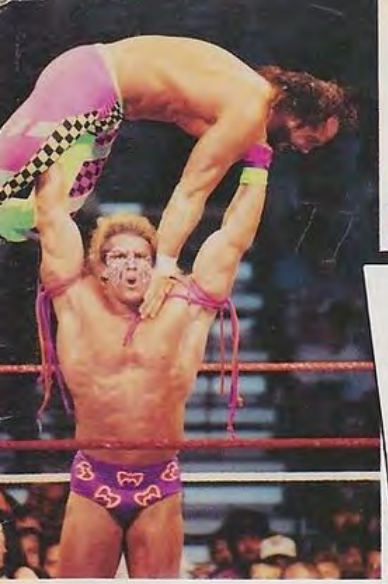

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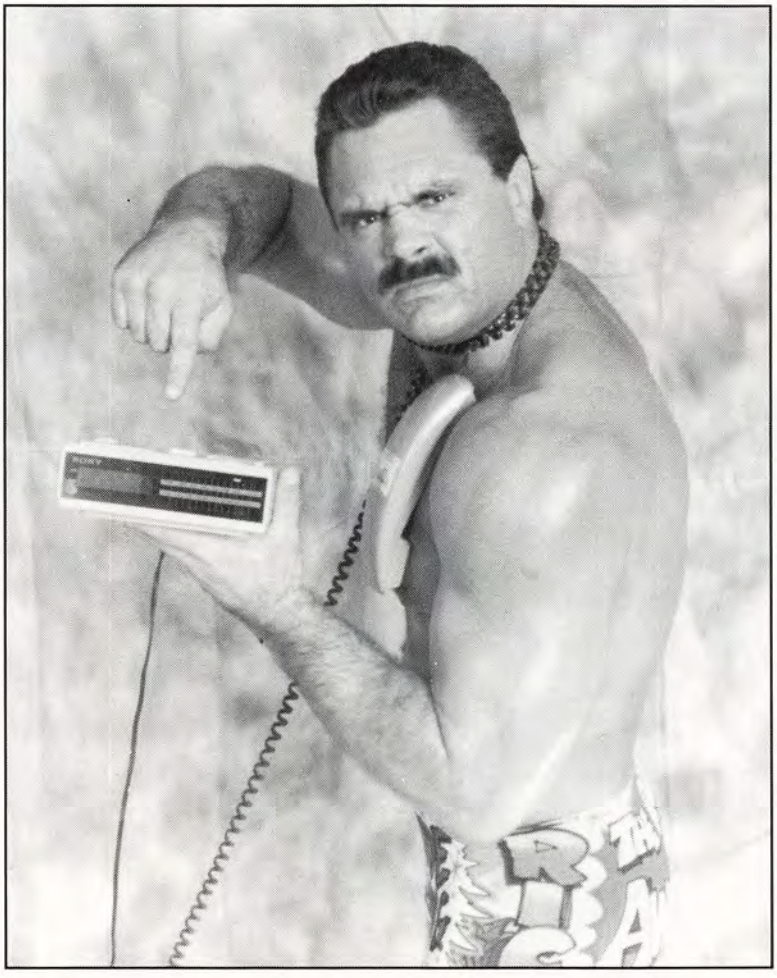

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Cover photos:
Luger by Bill Apter
Savage vs. Warrior by David Fitzgerald

SPORTS REVIEW WRESTLING (ISSN: 1052-0880) is published monthly by G.C. London Publishing Assoc. Inc., Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571. Second-class postage paid at Rockville Centre, NY, 11571 and additional offices. POSTMASTER: Send change of address notices to "Sports Review Wrestling," Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY, 11571. Single copy price $2.25 ($2.95 in Canada, £1.95 in U.K). Not responsible for the loss or nonreturn of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. All rights reserved. **FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES:** Jim Messing, J.E. Publishers' Representative, 11150 West Olympic Blvd., Suite 600, Los Angeles, CA, 90064, (1-800) 678-9321. U.S. & Canadian distribution by Kable News Company, 11 West 42nd St, New York, NY, 10036; International distribution (excluding U.K.) by Worldwide Media Service Inc., 115 East 23rd St., New York, NY, 10010; U.K. distribution by Comag, Tavistock Rd., West Drayton, Middlesex UB77QE, England. **Printed in U.S.A.**

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TO ELLNER'S DEFENSE

I am writing in defense of Eddie Ellner, who I think is a fine and insightful journalist. In fact, if he were dropped from this magazine, I wouldn't bother to read it anymore.

If Rita Allander thinks his column should be terminated because of his views of people ("Crooked Talk," April 1991), then no one should listen to her because of her views of Ellner.

So, Rita, unless you are getting paid to state your views, nobody cares. Long live Ellner!

EMIL GARRUTO
Florham Park, NJ

WHO'S THE BROKEN ONE?

In regard to your story, "WrestleMania Bombshell! An Expert Psychologist Warns: 'Hulk Hogan Is At The Breaking Point!' " (June 1991), you had it wrong. It was *Sgt. Slaughter* who reached the breaking point when he tossed a fireball at Hogan after the WrestleMania match!

It was the act of a crazed individual. Slaughter and Gen. Adnan just couldn't accept losing, so they struck without warning, like the cowards they are. It was definitely the most disgusting act I've ever seen on TV.

If Slaughter doesn't clean up his act soon, he should be banned! No questions asked!

DAVID PAULSON
Newark, NJ

DON'T BLAME LEX

How dare you even imply that Lex Luger in any way cost Sting the WCW World title ("Luger Denies Outrageous Charge: 'I Did Not Help Flair Beat Sting!' " May 1991)! Lex and Sting have maintained their friendship for a long time now. To suggest that Lex

Sgt. Slaughter lost more than the WWF World title at WrestleMania VII, reader David Paulson says; he lost his mind when he attacked Hulk Hogan afterward with a fireball.

would do anything to help Ric Flair is ridiculous!

Whoever started this rumor should hang his head in shame!

NORA WILLIAMS
Detroit

Craig Peters' article on Lex Luger was totally unbelievable. It was ignorant, stupid, and very poor journalism. It truly shows Peters' lack of intellect and good journalism. If anything, Flair was helped by the referee's lack of brain cells.

If you can't think of good material, do us all a favor: Don't write.

BOBBY HARRIS
Copperas Cove, TX

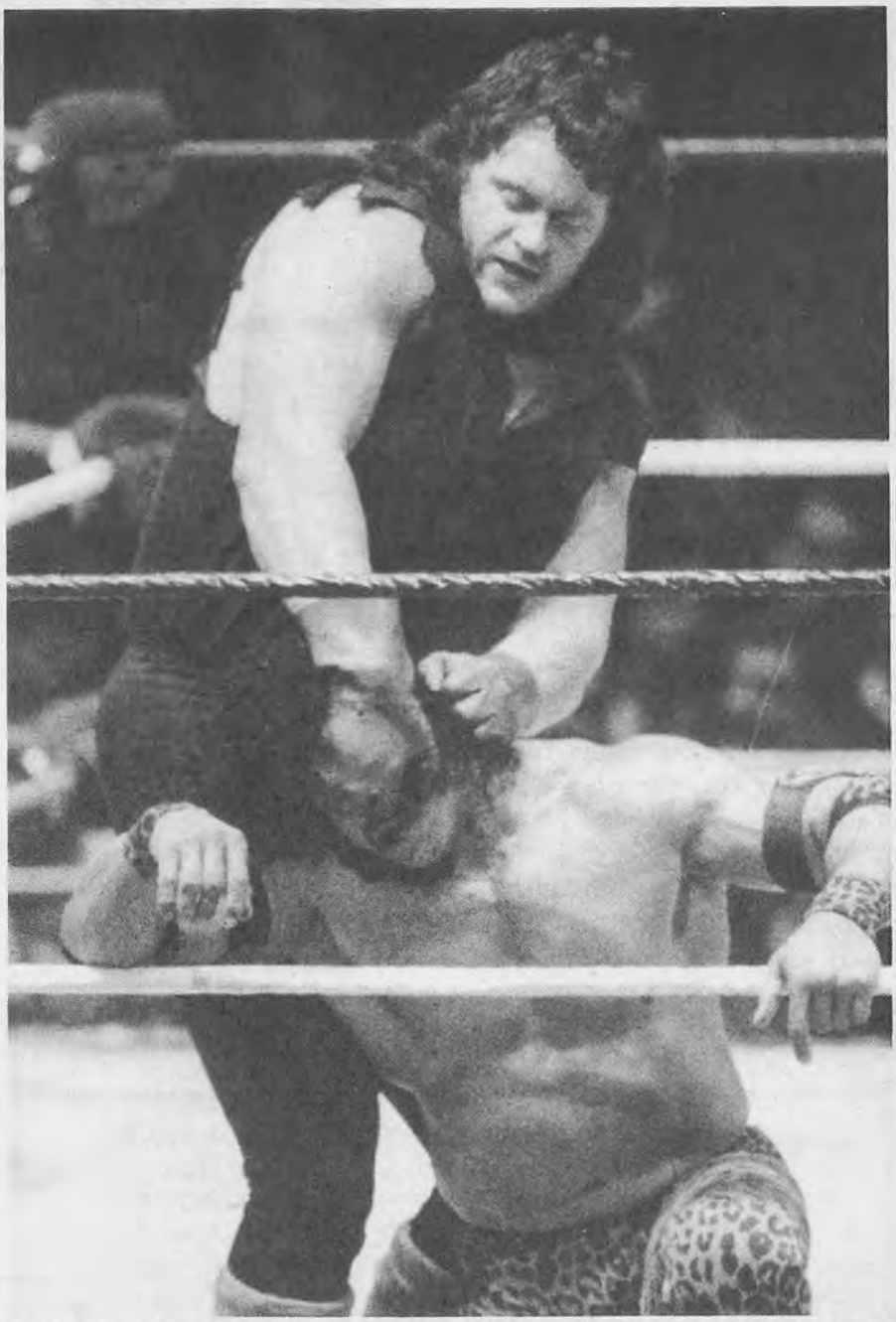
Is "Dr. Death" Steve Williams good or bad? Reader Barbara Lemon isn't quite sure.

WHAT'S UP, DOC?

Every time I see that there's an interview with "Dr. Death" Steve Williams in one of your magazines (May 1991), I wonder just exactly what he'll say this time. You never really know which side Williams is on: fan favorite or rulebreaker. One day he says how much he enjoys all the fans rooting him on, and the next day he's the nastiest person you'd ever want to meet.

There's no denying Williams' greatness; I just wish he was a little more stable. Then if I didn't like him, at least I could respect him.

BARBARA LEMON
New Paltz, NY



The Undertaker may have impressive wins over Jimmy Snuka, but reader Nigel Morrissey is not convinced that the big man is championship material.

UNDERTAKER OVERRATED

What's all this about The Undertaker? Yes, he is a big, tough, scary-looking man. Yes, he can walk on top of the ropes. But he isn't a very skilled grappler.

What do victories over washed-up Jimmy Snuka prove? Let's see how Undertaker fares against men like World champion Hulk Hogan or Ultimate Warrior. Let's see if his manager, the laughable Paul Bearer, can help him on those occasions.

NIGEL MORRISSEY
Manchester, England

ONE NIGHT ONLY

I agree with what Bill Apter wrote in "Locker Room Confidential" about one-night tournaments (May 1991). He said they weren't the best way to determine a champion, that for a tournament to mean something, it should be held over the course of a week or a month.

It would be interesting to go back and look at one-night tournaments to see how long the winners reigned. In the most notable one I can think of, Randy Savage's WWF World title vic-

(Continued on page 50)

THE TATTLER

EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ: In the latest violent chapter of the feud between WCW U.S. champion Lex Luger and Nikita Koloff, the "Russian Nightmare" destroyed Luger's gold-plated title belt during a television taping in Gainesville, Georgia. That shocking incident, combined with a wild brawl on April 4 at the Byrne Meadowlands Arena here, has WCW officials extremely concerned.

Koloff is still upset about Luger's controversial U.S. title win over him in 1987, and has stooped to vile lows to try to hurt Luger. Koloff slammed the "Total Package" with a chain during the Meadowlands match, but it was Luger who was reprimanded by WCW officials after striking referee Bill Alfonso with the chain following Koloff's disqualification.

LUGER VS. KOLOFF

"Luger's conduct was unbefitting a champion," said WCW official Grizzly Smith. "I know Luger was provoked, but there is no excuse for his actions."

There was no excuse for Koloff's actions in Gainesville. Koloff was being interviewed by commentator Jim Ross and, as usual, challenging Luger. Koloff was obviously surprised when Luger stormed down the aisle, and he responded by throwing punches at the U.S. champion. Soon, Koloff and Luger fought their way inside the ring, prompting both locker rooms to empty to try to break up the melee. During the skirmish, Koloff grabbed the U.S. belt, smashed it in Luger's face, then rammed the belt against the ringpost six times.

"This is horrible," said a weary Luger as he inspected what was left of his belt after the incident. "I got a little upset and hit a referee, so the officials lowered the boom on me. Koloff wrecks an important title belt, and he doesn't even get a slap on the wrist. That Russian's going to get more than a slap from *me*. I can't remember the last time I've been this mad."

Koloff laughed off Luger's threats.

"I have shown this man to be the loser he really is," said Koloff. "He

(Continued on page 62)

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STRAIGHT talk with EDDIE ELLNER

Call me a **Matt Brock**-in-training, but I can't imagine the wrestling of today leaving any lasting impression on the children of today.

In my lifetime, one of the greatest wrestling moments will always be the night **"Classy" Freddie Blassie** used a fake arm cast to beat and batter WWF World champion **Pedro Morales**. The unfolding drama—first you admired Blassie for his outspokenness (at least I did), then you admired his

FRED BLASSIE

guts for blasting the popular champion (at least I did), then you admired his smarts since it was Morales, insulted and injured, who demanded an immediate match (at least I did, dammit!). Suddenly Blassie, hardly a number-one contender, was wrestling for the WWF championship.

FUNK SR. VS. NEGRO

And how about the night **Dory Funk Sr.** and **Cyclone Negro** engaged in a 104-minute marathon war: The first 10 rows of ringside were bathed in their blood!

These are the boyhood memories I took from pro grappling, moments where I was taught all I ever needed to know about stealth, courage, subterfuge, and sadism from the masters: **The Sheik**, **The Grand Wizard**, **Prof. Tanaka** and **Mr. Fuji**, **Bruiser**, and **Crusher**.

GRAND WIZARD

What will you kids treasure from these days as memories? The time **The Undertaker** buried **The Ultimate Warrior** in a coffin? The **Brother Love** talk show? **Bobby Heenan** and **Gorilla Monsoon**?

Today's WWF: One more reason to not bring any more children into the world.

The part about Ultimate Warrior and the Undertaker is a little weird. I thought the Ultimate One would feel among friends six feet under.

Do USWA officials believe **Tojo Yamamoto** has to catch a flight after every match and that's why he carries his suitcase to ringside? They would *never* suspect him of using the suitcase as a weapon, although two of Yamamoto's charges, **Tom Prichard** and **Eric Embry**, *have* used it to render opponents unconscious. *Must* be a coincidence.

From the Go Figure Dept.: **Randy Savage** is one of the five most hated men in wrestling until he loses a loser-must-retire (a.k.a. loser-goes-to-rival-federation, or loser-must-

BROTHER LOVE

ELIZABETH

wrestle-under-mask) match to Ultimate Warrior and is rescued from a **Sherri Martel** postmatch attack by his former manager/lover, **Elizabeth**. What kind of signal does this send to aspiring wrestlers? To be popular, simply get thrashed by your opponent, beaten up by a woman, and saved by your abandoned ex-girlfriend. Quite a career path the once-great Mr. Savage has drawn for himself.

Let me get this straight: To provide a fair match to the fans and wrestlers, the Japanese hire two officials for the **Ric Flair-Tatsumi Fujinami** WCW World title match in Tokyo. Sure enough, one ref is accidentally knocked out and the Japanese are looking brilliant. The second ref leaps into the ring and applies the three-count and declares Fujinami the rightful victor. But, *noooooo!* says the WCW bureaucracy. That second referee was not authorized to administer a pin count inside the ring.

Could it be that the idea of a Japanese-based champion—and one good enough to keep the title for a long time—scared the WCW officials into some creative rule interpretation? Hey, not an accusation—just a thought. There's a difference.

The New Jersey Nightmares. That's what they call a redundancy, isn't it?

RANDY SAVAGE

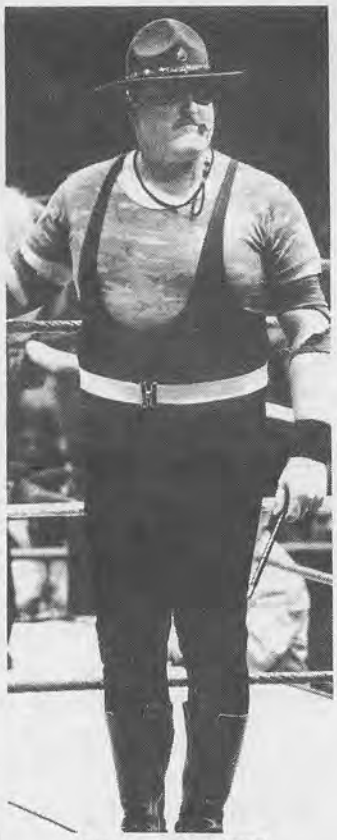
More on Savage: Sure enough, the "retired" (*wink*, *wink*) "Macho King" picked up some freelance work—in the WWF!—two days after his WrestleMania etched-in-stone, loser-leave-wrestling loss. The WWF claims he was "fulfilling contractual obligations." Forgive me again, but in the old days, wrestlers who dropped loser-leave-town matches were too embarrassed to be seen within 500 miles of the federation. It would take months and years for them to return. Ah, the

LEGION OF DOOM

good old days—when men honored their contracts.

In October, say you read it here: **Will Clark** National League MVP. **Bo Jackson** will hit 18 home runs after his return in mid-August. Also: a big round of applause for the 1991 NBA champion **Los Angeles Lakers.**

I told you so, *again:* Six years ago, at the peak of Hulkamania, I insisted **The Road Warriors** could make radioactive waste out of **Hulk Hogan**. Wa-



SGT. SLAUGHTER

ter's flowed under everyone's bridge since then; all three men are suffering from diminished skills, but the prediction finally came true in Japan.

The Nasty Boys will fade faster than oat bran.

And about this big burning incident between **Sgt. Slaughter** and Hogan, I don't see how a little fire can possibly penetrate Hogan's radioactive skin anyway. Heck, without the ozone layer, half you readers will get burned worse this summer at the beach.

But have a nice time anyway.

Till next month.

[Editor's note: The views expressed by Eddie Ellner are his alone, and do not necessarily reflect the views of anyone else on the editorial board of this magazine. In fact, they don't.] □

LOCKER ROOM Confidential

with Bill Apter

BY TOTAL COINCIDENCE, I was visiting with Magnum T.A. when it happened and we both saw it on TV at the same time. We were enjoying a lazy afternoon, talking about the old times, when Nikita Koloff appeared on the screen.

The *old* Nikita Koloff.

"I heard he was coming back to the WCW," Magnum said. "It's good to see Nikita back in the big time. You know, he's a great man and he still has a great future. I think everything that happened with me and then his uncle and then all the organizational crap in the federation got to him. He's Russian, you know, and he's not used to dealing with those things."

Within moments, however, Magnum's words of praise turned to horror. Within moments, it was clear that Nikita was back to wipe out any fond memories fans might still have of this great Soviet warrior.

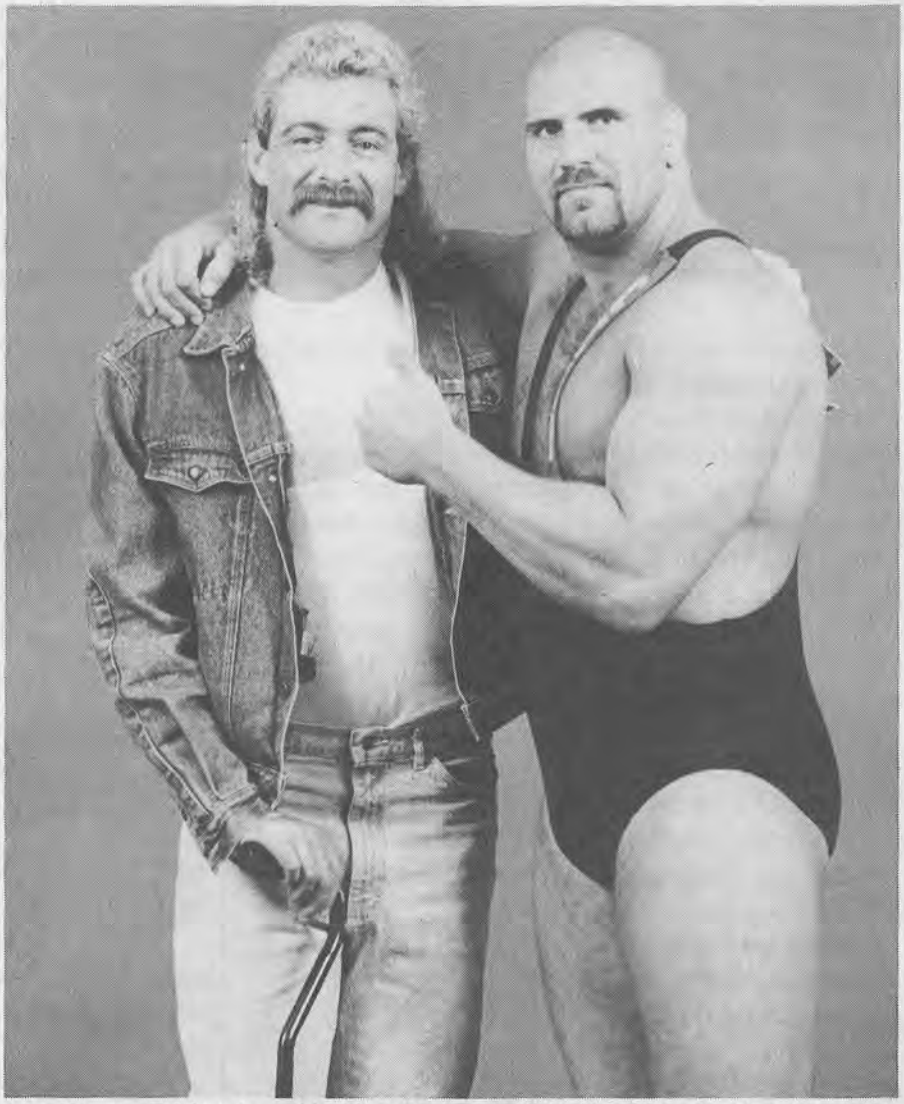
"I was robbed of the U.S. title many years ago," Nikita said, "and I am determined to take my belt back—or cripple Lex Luger in the process."

My heart dropped to below my knees, but Magnum looked like his heart had just been torn out and crushed to pieces. He was hurt badly. He turned off the TV, sat back in his easy chair, and took a deep breath.

Minutes later, Magnum turned to me and said, "I don't believe it. I just don't believe it."

I could certainly understand his sudden depression.

Back in 1986, Magnum was one of the top stars in the sport. He was extremely popular and his feud with Nikita Koloff, the hated but extremely talented Russian, made headlines worldwide. Here were two great young athletes going at it in the primes of their careers.



After Magnum T.A.'s auto accident in 1986, he and Nikita Koloff forged a close friendship. But after Nikita's recent return to rulebreaking, that friendship has been damaged.

They had a fabulous best-of-seven U.S. title series that Koloff won in seven matches. But shortly afterward, Magnum was seriously injured in a car accident. For a time, it looked like Magnum might die. For the longest time, it looked like he would be paralyzed.

"I cry for Magnum T.A.," was Nikita's shocking statement one day. Nikita, it seemed, had been touched by Magnum's bravery during their magnificent series of bouts and in the wake of the accident. Incredibly, Nikita decided to devote his career to Magnum. Nikita paid a great price for this dedication: He and his uncle, Ivan Koloff, entered into a long feud.

In 1987, Nikita teamed with Dusty Rhodes, a former archrival, in the Jim Crockett Sr. Memorial Cup tag team tournament. They dedicated the tour-

(Continued on page 56)

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No one knows wrestling better than the fans. Because of this, we're now giving these experts a forum for their views and opinions. Each month, we'll ask a controversial question and have the fans answer—no matter what those answers might be!

THE QUESTION:
"What is your opinion of the American wrestlers who competed on the joint WCW/New Japan and WWF/SWS cards held recently in your country?" (asked exclusively of fans in Japan)

THE ANSWERS:
Ishi Yoshiaki, Tokyo: "I am very impressed with the quality of American wrestling, especially in the WCW. I believed all the good tag teams were in Japan, but Rick and Scott Steiner changed my opinion definitely. I saw them on the big New Japan/WCW show and they were outstanding. They work so well together and their maneuvers are superb. I hope they, and others like them, pay us a visit back very soon."

Tatsumi Fujinami's match against Ric Flair in Japan convinced some Japanese of Fujinami's superiority, but others were more impressed with the "Nature Boy."

Koichi Matsada, Kobe: "As one who attended the WWF/SWS card here in Kobe, I truly believe the Japanese outwrestled the Americans. I respect the Americans, of course. Hulk Hogan is one of the greatest champions in the history of the world. But Randy Savage and Bret Hart, two fine wrestlers in the U.S., were pinned by Japanese stars. I still have seen nothing to change my view that Japanese wrestlers are generally superior to Americans."

Norio Moto, Osaka: "The WCW wrestlers I saw at the New Japan show were truly excellent. The match between Ric Flair and Tatsumi Fujinami, though it ended in controversy, was a classic. I have seen Flair wrestle in Japan before, and he seems to improve every time. It would be a shame if all the controversy dissuades him from returning here. He would do very well for himself if he decided to compete here permanently."

Stephen Du, Tokyo: "I was fortunate to have attended both the WCW and WWF cards at the Tokyo Dome. They proved to me something I have always believed: There is really no difference in the quality of Japanese and American wrestling. We both have outstanding scientific competitors, and we both have men who merely lumber around the ring. Good wrestling, as well as bad, can be found anywhere."

(Continued on page 60)

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THE "QUESTION OF THE MONTH" IS:

"If you could play another professional sport full-time, which would it be?"

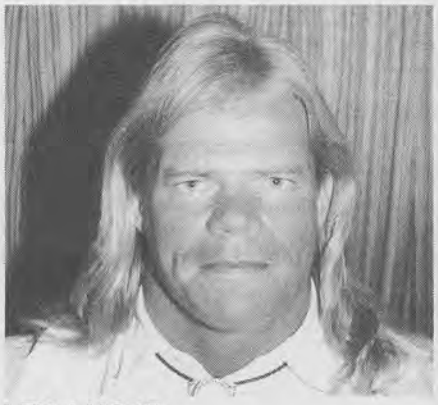
Submitted by: Smith Tenmina Pelham, NY

RIC FLAIR

"Like a lot of wrestlers, I played football in college as well as wrestled. I could have gone right into the NFL if I'd wanted to, but I saw wrestling as a better way to express my individuality. Hey, I'll bet I could be a starting quarterback even today. Joe Montana, Boomer Esiason; they don't have anything on the 'Nature Boy.' Not even Lawrence Taylor would sack me!"

TERRY FUNK

"This is the greatest sport in the world! Except for acting, there's nothing else I would want to do. But if you had to force an answer out of me, I would say I'd like to box. Aside from the gloves, it isn't too much different from the kind of wrestling I like. I know I'd be a champion, 'cause even these world-champion heavyweights would never last a minute in a wrestling ring."



LEX LUGER

"I played offensive tackle in the USFL and the CFL, and I could have kept on playing. I'm a better wrestler than a football player, though, so that's why I've stuck with the ring. But football isn't the sport I'd go with if I weren't wrestling. I'd probably try to make the pro golf tour. Seriously. I enjoy golf. With a little more practice, I think I could make it on the links."

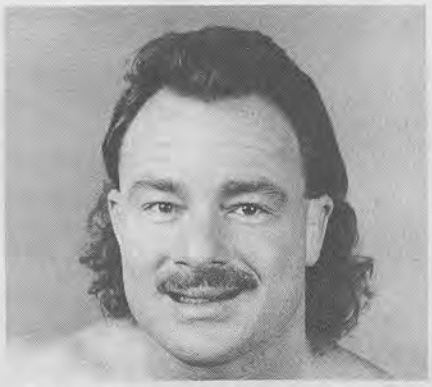
ERIC EMBRY

"No other sport out there gives you the chance to beat people up like wrestling does, so I don't know *what* I'd do. Maybe I'd decide to become a bowler and invite my good buddy Tom Prichard to join me. Could you see the two of us blindside some poor guy just as he's about to roll a 300 game? Hee, hee! That's our idea of fun. We'd win every tournament."

RS ANSWER OF THE MONTH

SCOTT NORTON

"As some of you may know, I was a world champion arm-wrestler, the best. But I wouldn't do that full-time. Being from Minneapolis, I grew up watching a lot of ice hockey. I'd be tremendous at it. I'd lay a check on a guy that would crush every bone in his body. There's never been anyone with my build out on the ice. I'd scare those wimps to death!"



B. BRIAN BLAIR

"Wrestling has always been number-one for me. But, you know, I might give tennis a try. I think I'm agile enough to move around the court, and I have enough stamina to play a five-set match. I'd just have to watch myself. I've been in wrestling for so long, if I lost my temper I might just hit my opponent over the head with my racket!"

TONY ATLAS

"Of course, being the great athlete I am, I would excel at any sport of my choosing. My manager, Tony Rumble, will vouch for that. But since I have remained in such fine shape, I think I'd become a body-builder again. I'd blow away all those muscleheads first time I stepped out on the stage. I'd have the Mr. Olympia title locked up in no time!"

STEVE WILLIAMS

"Do you even have to ask? Football, you idiot! I kicked butt at Oklahoma University and I kicked butt in the pros! You ask anybody who ever played with me or coached me and they'll tell you I was one of a kind! It's a ripoff that I wasn't drafted in the first round. But it's still not too late. Maybe some last-place team will have the sense to draft me yet!"

KEVIN VON ERICH

"This is a little out of the ordinary, but I might give it a shot as a marathon runner. *There's* a challenge, running 26 miles in less than 2½ hours. You're not so much competing against other men as competing against yourself. The Von Erichs have always been popular in Boston, so I might go right to the top and enter the Boston Marathon. But I wouldn't run barefoot!"

DAN SPIVEY

"I got the size for it, I got the moves for it, so why not basketball? You talk about power forwards; I'd be the most powerful one of them all, a definite all-star. I'd score 40 points a game and get 30 rebounds on top of that! That freak El Gigante might have played basketball, but he doesn't have what it takes to go one-on-one with me."

From time to time, the editors of this magazine find it necessary to condemn those in wrestling who would subvert the basic principles of decency, integrity, and honesty. Without such truths, our sport will die

Two days after losing a retirement match to The Ultimate Warrior at WrestleMania VII, Randy Savage wrestled this match in Las Vegas against Rick Martel.

IT HAS OFTEN been said that justice is blind. In other words, the rules are the same for everyone. There are no special favors. Everyone is treated equally.

But if justice is blind, is punishment arbitrary? Can two men be found guilty of the same crime and receive different punishments?

Randy Savage was not guilty of any crime when he lost a retirement match to The Ultimate Warrior at WrestleMania VII. He was simply guilty of losing a match in which the loser had to retire. And, in fact, the WWF said it would stand behind the stipulations of the match.

Translation: Randy Savage was a goner!

Well, if that was the case, why did Savage wrestle on several cards after WrestleMania VII? Why was he allowed to fulfill his commitments? Why weren't these commitments wiped out, as they should have been?

Why isn't there equal justice for all? Why wasn't Savage forced to immediately bear the brunt of his punishment?

The answers to these questions are unfathomable. They have nothing to do with right and wrong. They only have to do with money.

It is with this in mind that the editors of *Sports Review Wrestling* accuse the World Wrestling Federation of turning its back while Savage wrestled after losing the retirement match at WrestleMania.

By doing this, the WWF has turned its back on justice. It has declared that retirement matches are meaningless (just as we have often seen that loser-leave-town matches are meaningless, too). And it has given the fans a hard slap in the face.

We agree that retirement matches and loser-leave-town matches are unnecessary. They deprive federations of some of their greatest stars. Sure, they put the ultimate price on a match. But in the wake of the match itself, there is little to cheer. There is only mourning for the loss.

We wish there had never been a retirement match at WrestleMania VII. We think the Warrior and Savage could have found another way to settle their differences. But they didn't.

As we have seen, one of the biggest problems with such matches is that the punishment is so difficult (impossible?) to accept. Savage does not want to retire from wrestling. By getting into this match, Savage was betting millions on his future. But, as we have seen, Savage wasn't ready to be ushered to the door.

The WWF might claim that Savage was merely being allowed to fulfill commitments made before the retirement match. After all, Savage could not have been asked to delay making plans until WrestleMania was over.

(Continued on page 58)

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LOOKING AT...

Matt Brock:

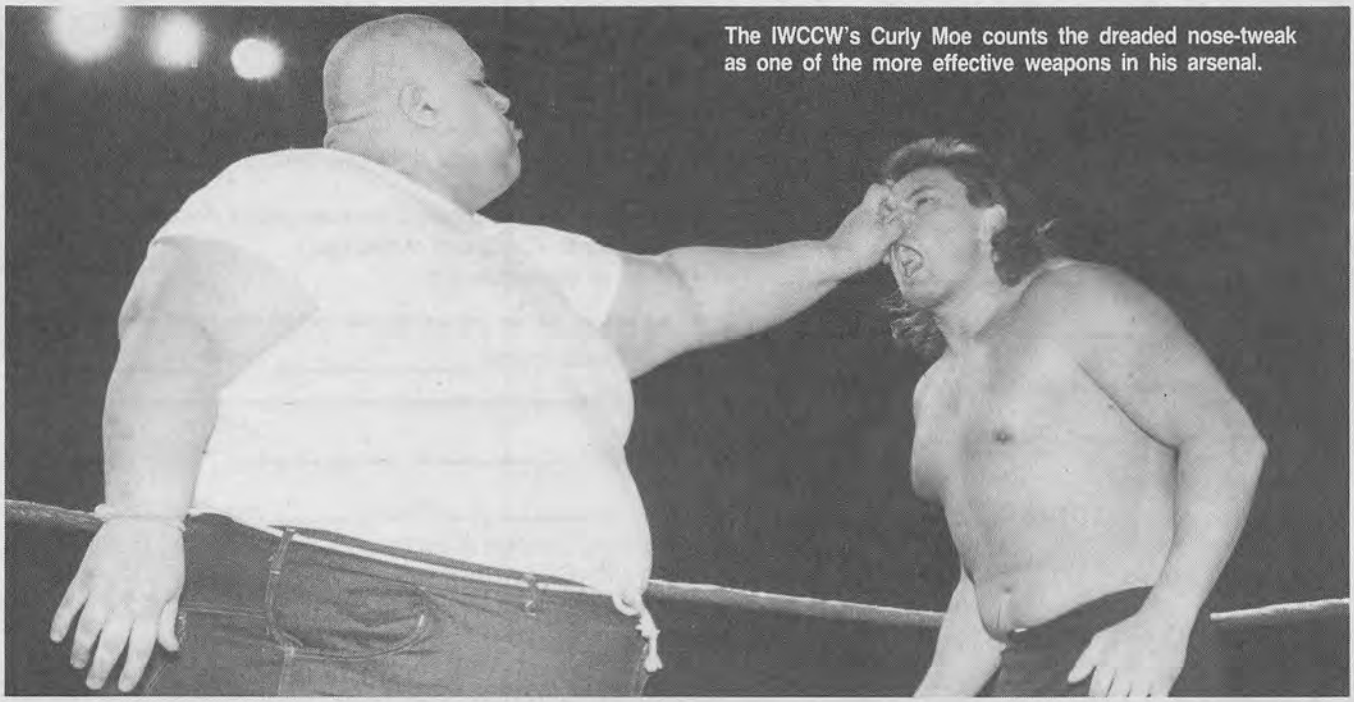
THINGS WERE STARTING to look up. Really! I had just returned from Tokyo, where I saw one of the greatest wrestling cards of the past 20 years. The joint WCW/New Japan card on March 21 at the Tokyo Dome reaffirmed my faith in this age-old sport.

For almost four solid hours, I was thrilled as I watched some of the greatest athletes in the world go at it. No messing around, no bull. From youngsters Tim Horner and Takayuki Iizuka to champions Ric Flair and Tatsumi Fujinami, this classic event featured top stars in exciting, hard-fought matches.

Just *thinking* of that card lowers my high blood pressure a couple of points. After years of having to endure snakes, bulldogs, valets, celebrities pretending to be wrestling fans, barbers, mounties, and prison guards, I finally got all I ever wanted: pure, unadulterated *wrestling*. I could see the sport slowly creeping back to its basic roots, thanks to the influence of the Japanese masters. I breathed a sigh of relief and pure joy.

The joy didn't last long. On my first weekend back home, I flipped on my television just in time to catch WWF wrestling and feel my mood change for the worse.

Strolling up the aisle was a man wearing some sort of reptile costume while carrying a torch. He climbed to the top turnbuckle, put the torch near his lips, and blew a ball of fire into the air. Ring announcer Howard Finkel



The IWCCW's Curly Moe counts the dreaded nose-tweak as one of the more effective weapons in his arsenal.

CURLY MOE

announced this man as The Dragon.

My God—it was Rick Steamboat! The man who thrilled the sport by winning and losing the WCW World title to Ric Flair two years ago has become yet another creature in Vince McMahon's circus of the stars. Sure, Steamboat looked as fine as ever, but just seeing this man with spiked dragon-like appendages (what do they call those things, anyway?) attatched to his arms and legs was enough to make my gag up my Wheatina. I didn't even want to see if Steamboat beat his opponent. I just shut my TV off and left the room.

No more WWF trash for today, I thought. Later that afternoon, I caught my usual double-dip of IWCCW and WCW (ain't cable grand?). Unfortunately, when the IWCCW program started, someone appeared who made Steamboat look like the bastion of integrity that he apparently *used* to be.

I thought I had tuned to the wrong channel. This disgustingly fat guy with a bald head and a derby stared back at me. He flipped his hat in the air, patted his chrome dome, and said the immortal words:

"Hey, don't be a knucklehead. *N'yuk, n'yuk, n'yuk! Ruff!*"

Nothing could prepare me for when I got my first look at Curly Moe. Has the whole world gone crazy? This morbidly obese 555-pounder (he describes his weight as "555⅜, depending on what I had for lunch") looks, walks, and talks just like Curly Howard of The Three Stooges. Granted, I always enjoyed the eye-poking, face-slapping antics of that immortal comedy team, but in a *wrestling ring?* I shuddered to think of what the guy would look like in action.

Let's get something clear right here: Curly Moe can hardly walk, let alone wrestle. He's also, as my grandfather would describe it, more than a little touched in the head. He really seems to think he's the *real* Curly! But he has such a unique style that it's going to take someone very powerful to beat him.

Curly's bulk—555 pounds!—makes it nearly impossible for a wrestler to drop him to the mat.

In his TV match against Sonny Austin, it was clear that Austin had 10 times the skill and at least 50 times the brains of Curly, but the bout was still no contest. How can you hurt a guy who stands 5'10" and weighs 555? You'd need a crane to lift him, and Austin couldn't budge the guy. It was kind of like watching Haystacks Calhoun after a lobotomy.

Curly downed Austin with an enzuigiri karate kick, but the big boy could only get his feet up to about Austin's lower back. Didn't matter. Once Curly laid his heaving, sweaty mass over Austin, it was all over but the retching.

So what has become of the sport I hold so dear? Within seven days, I watched Ric Flair, Tatsumi Fujinami, and Jushin Riger—and Curly Moe, The Dragon, and The Mountie. Isn't it obvious? Japanese wrestling honors tradition. U.S. fans seem to admire insipid schtick more than ability and pride.

Sometimes I feel like moving to Japan. *Sayonara,* stooge. □

POINT/COUNTERPOINT

POINT:
THIS MAGAZINE WAS CORRECT TO CHANGE THE NWA DESIGNATION TO WCW

The fact that NWA World champion Ric Flair is now *WCW* World champion Ric Flair makes no difference; only the name has changed, says Craig Peters.

By Craig Peters

THIS ISSUE HAS been a heated one for several months. It has been argued in phone calls between the editors of this magazine and the heads of the federation in question. It was posed to the readers of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Weekly.*

Does it really matter what a federation is called?

What if the name of the National Basketball Association was changed to World Championship Basketball? What if Major League Baseball was suddenly called World Championship Baseball?

I rest my case. This is an argument of historic proportions. It matters because the past is involved, and because several of the finest wrestlers of all-time risk being forgotten if this issue is taken too lightly.

But it hasn't been taken lightly and, as you have probably noticed, the name World Championship Wrestling *has* replaced the name National Wrestling Alliance in this magazine. I emphasize the word "name" because that is *all* that has changed. History hasn't changed. Titles haven't changed.

As I pointed out in *PWI Weekly,* we don't make the news, we only report it. And since the NWA name has fallen into disuse, we have no choice but to make the change in this magazine.

On TV shows, the federation is referred to as World Championship Wrestling or WCW. In reality, the only place where the NWA existed for the past several months was in the pages of this magazine.

Some may say we resisted change. In reality, we didn't want to jump the gun. Finally, it became clear that the name change *was* permanent. And, as I have pointed out, the NWA isn't dead. It has just been renamed.

One *PWI Weekly* reader argued that "The NWA no longer exists." I disagree. The NWA exists as World Championship Wrestling. The wrestlers are the same. The history is still there, too—and this magazine and its sister publications pledge to keep that history alive forever.

Craig Peters is editor-in-chief of *Sports Review Wrestling*

There are two sides to every story, and nowhere is that more true than in professional wrestling. Each month, two of the world's most respected mat journalists will debate an important issue concerning the sport, facing off for an exchange of ideas, leaving the final decision up to *you*!

COUNTERPOINT:

THIS MAGAZINE WAS WRONG TO CHANGE THE NWA DESIGNATION TO WCW

Dory Funk Jr. was a great NWA World champion, and Andy Rodriguez fears that the memory of his title reign and the accomplishments of others are being ignored by the WCW.

By Andy Rodriguez

HISTORY IS A funny thing. The human mind is a fickle thing. History can be changed with the flick of a hand. With one event, hundreds of years can be wiped out and forgotten.

Perhaps that's what NWA officials had in mind when they slowly but surely made the transformation to WCW. Maybe something about the NWA's past embarrassed WCW officials. Perhaps they just wanted a fresh start. The WWF has gone a long way toward proving that, at least in wrestling, new is better.

But with this change they forgot about Frank Gotch and George Hackenschmidt. They forgot about Ric Flair's first six World titles. They forgot about Jack and Jerry Brisco, Ole and Gene Anderson, and The Midnight Express.

They forgot about the one thing that wrestling has and always will have: a great and proud history.

What happened? Why was this name change necessary? And why didn't *Sports Review Wrestling* and its sister publications fight the name change?

Craig Peters argued: "We don't make the news, we only report it." Bull! When the USWA was passing off its heavyweight title as a world title, we didn't accept it. At that time, we only recognized the NWA, WWF, and AWA as world champions.

This family of publications has a unique connection with the sport it covers. It is unlike any other journalism-sport relationship. We know our power. We know our responsibility. We *are* capable of making judgments.

In this case, we took the easy way out. The NWA decided to make a sweeping change and we went along with it.

It wasn't right. And, fortunately, it's not too late. Let's hope the connection between the NWA and the WCW isn't forgotten or—heaven forbid!—wiped out entirely.

There's far too much at stake.

Andy Rodriguez is an associate editor of *Sports Review Wrestling*

WRESTLER OF THE MONTH

TATSUMI FUJINAMI

SOME MONTHS, IT'S a very tough job for the editors of *Sports Review Wrestling* to pick a worthy "Wrestler of the Month." There have been times when an entire 30-day period goes by with no major titles changing hands and no startling upsets to report.

Other months—like this one—the task is much easier. Just three weeks before we went to press, the WWF held its annual WrestleMania extravaganza on March 24 in Los Angeles. From that card alone, there were no less than four "Wrestler of the Month" candidates.

Of course, Hulk Hogan scored a stirring victory over Sgt. Slaughter to capture the WWF World title for the third time. On that same card, The Ultimate Warrior defeated Randy Savage in a retirement bout between former WWF World champions, and The Nasty Boys defeated two-time champions The Hart Foundation to win the WWF World tag team title.

It was a fabulous month for the WCW World tag team champions as well. Three days before WrestleMania at the joint WCW/New Japan card at the Tokyo Dome in Japan, Rick and Scott Steiner defeated the highly regarded Japanese duo of Hiro Hase and Kensuki Sasaki to add the IWGP tag team belts to their ever-expanding resume.

All of the wrestlers previously mentioned have one thing in common: They all finished the month very happy men. Strangely, the man we choose to honor as "Wrestler of the Month," is not very happy at all.

Tatsumi Fujinami pinned WCW World champion Ric Flair, but, in a strange twist of fate, the belt was taken away from him just a few hours later.

Anytime someone pins Flair, a seven-time World champion, it's truly an event. And for showing true dignity and class—as well as stunning ability—Fujinami has earned our respect. His story is one that demands to be told.

No less an expert than former NWA World champion Lou Thesz has called Fujinami one of the all-time greats. In 1971, a 17-year-old Fujinami made his pro debut in Japan. Weighing only 165 pounds, he was classed in the light heavyweight division. Fujinami, blessed with a no-nonsense scientific style, longed to be ranked as a legitimate heavyweight, but he made the best of his situation.

During his first trip to the U.S., Fujinami won the WWF junior heavyweight title from Jose Estrada on January 23, 1978, at Madison Square Garden in New York. He also held several light heavyweight belts in Japan. As successful as he was, he never lost sight of his goal: being a heavyweight contender. He worked hard in the gym, continually bulking up.

By 1982, Fujinami had filled out to 231 pounds, and he was ready to make his mark. He dominated the International Wrestling Grand Prix tag team title, winning the coveted belts with partners Antonio Inoki and Kengo Kimura. He also won the title with Riki Choshu, with whom he subsequently had a violent falling-out, beginning a feud that continues to this day.

Fujinami was considered Japan's best all-around grappler when tragedy struck. In 1989, he attempted a side-suplex on Big Van Vader, whose 375 pounds were too much for Fujinami to lift. When Tatsumi landed with Vader on top of him, he sustained a crushed hip and spine. He was out of the sport for more than a year, and was forced to undergo painful therapy and acupuncture treatments.

Miraculously, Fujinami made it back last year, and he soon lived out his championship dream by defeating his former partner, Choshu, for the IWGP title on December 26, 1990, in Hamamatsu, Japan. Fujinami seemed more determined than ever, and he needed to be: He'd soon have another prize to shoot for.

In late-February, Fujinami was signed to wrestle Flair in the main event of the first joint WCW/New Japan event. Fujinami has long respected both Flair and the WCW title, and knew he would have to be on top of his game to defeat the "Nature Boy."

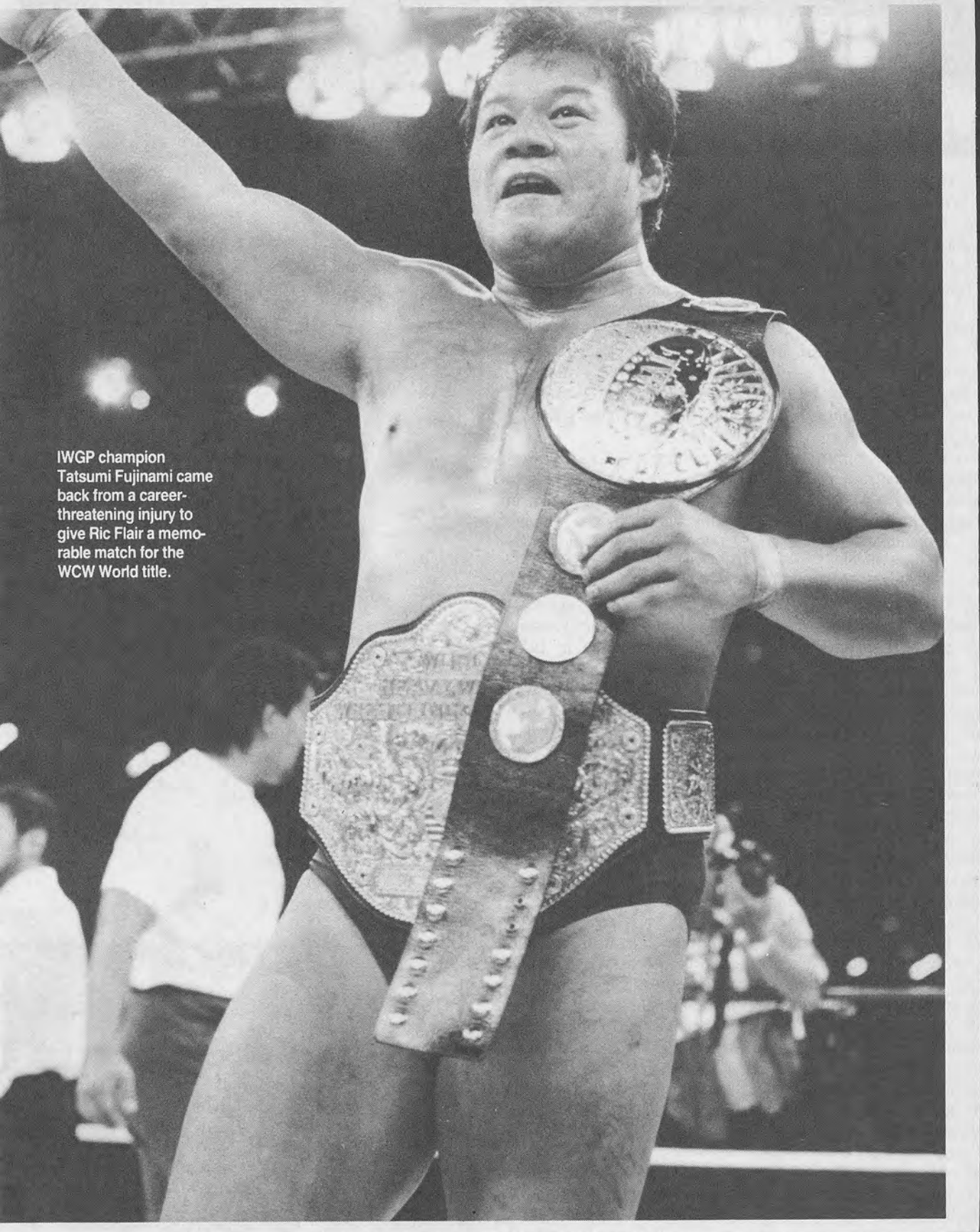
Fujinami could not have been better. Flair has long been acknowledged as a technical master, but Fujinami matched him hold for hold. It was a brilliant display of skill that would be marred by a confusing and disputed conclusion.

Referee Bill Alfonso was knocked out of the ring following a collision with Flair. Fujinami tried to pin Flair three times, but no referee was there to make the count. Moments later, Flair charged Fujinami, who backdropped the champion over the top rope. After substitute referee Mr. Hatori entered the ring, Fujinami caught Flair with an abdominal stretch, rolled it into a reverse cradle, and scored a stunning pinfall victory.

Or so it appeared. After the match, WCW officials declared the bout a no-contest, claiming that Alfonso, though dazed, saw Fujinami propel Flair over the top rope—grounds for a disqualification. New Japan officials, however, consider Fujinami to be the rightful champion. So does Fujinami. So do the fans in Japan (and many in the U.S. as well).

Regardless of the WCW title-ownership issue, Fujinami has scored one of the greatest comebacks in history. He is a legend is his native country. And if there is any justice, he will someday be a legend here as well.

Our "Wrestler of the Month" award seems too meager for such a man. □



IWGP champion Tatsumi Fujinami came back from a career-threatening injury to give Ric Flair a memorable match for the WCW World title.

SPECIAL SECTION:
A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE WWF WORLD TITLE!

AT FIRST, THEY weren't even sure it was going to fly. When some maverick promoters decided to break away from the NWA in 1963, they named their new East Coast-based organization the World Wide Wrestling Federation. After much consideration, the promoters named veteran Buddy Rogers the first WWF (then known as WWWF) World champion. The promoters crossed their fingers and hoped the new league would gain credibility with the fans.

They needn't have worried. Rogers was an appropriate choice as first champion for what was about to become a true world title. Rogers had been defeated by Lou Thesz for the NWA World title on January 24 in Toronto, but the East Coast promoters refused to sanction the switch and the WWF was born.

Rogers was again on top, but his reign didn't last long. Powerful Bruno Sammartino rocked the sport by defeating Rogers in just 48 seconds on May 17, 1963, at Madison Square Garden in New York. The man who would become known as the "Living Legend" dominated the WWF until 1971, when he was pinned by Ivan Koloff in a shocking upset.

Bruno's hold over the WWF wasn't nearly over. Pedro Morales defeated Koloff for the belt, then held it for more than two years before being dethroned by rugged Stan Stasiak. Sammartino easily disposed of the Oregon native to win his second title in 1973, leading to a second reign lasting 3½ years.

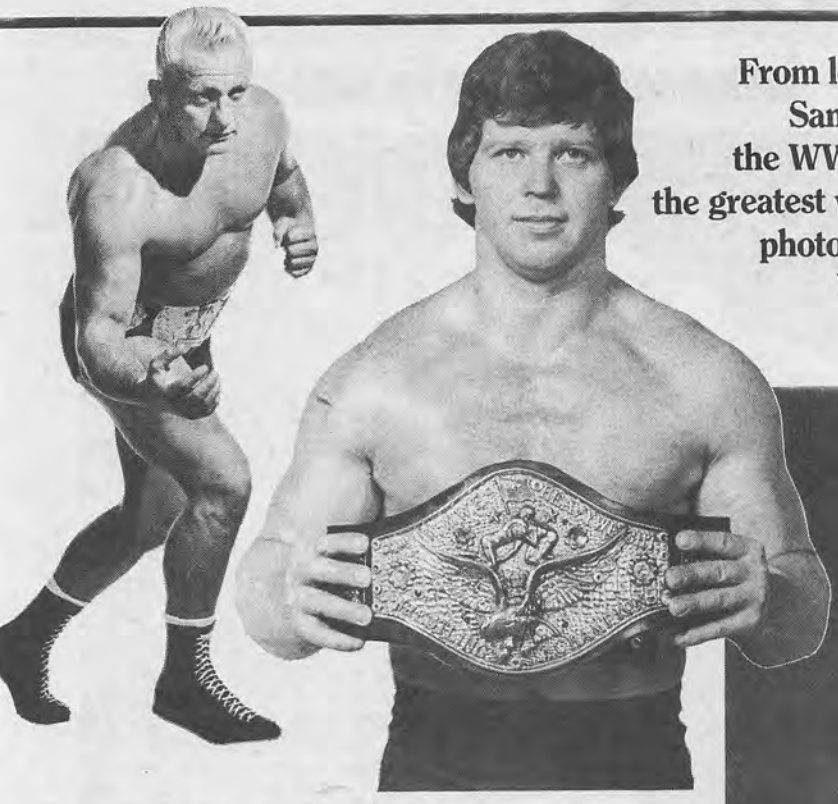
Superstar Graham defeated Bruno for the belt in 1977. The wily rulebreaker held the title for a year until scientific marvel Bob Backlund downed Graham to begin his own five-year reign. Right around the corner, however, was a WWF World champion who was about to change the sport forever.

What would the title be without Hulk Hogan? After The Iron Sheik defeated Backlund, Hogan steamrolled into Madison Square Garden and crushed the Iranian for the championship on January 24, 1984. Like Sammartino and Backlund before him, the "Hulkster" dominated the belt until being downed in 1988, when a paid-off referee Earl Hebner scored a bogus three-count in favor of Andre the Giant.

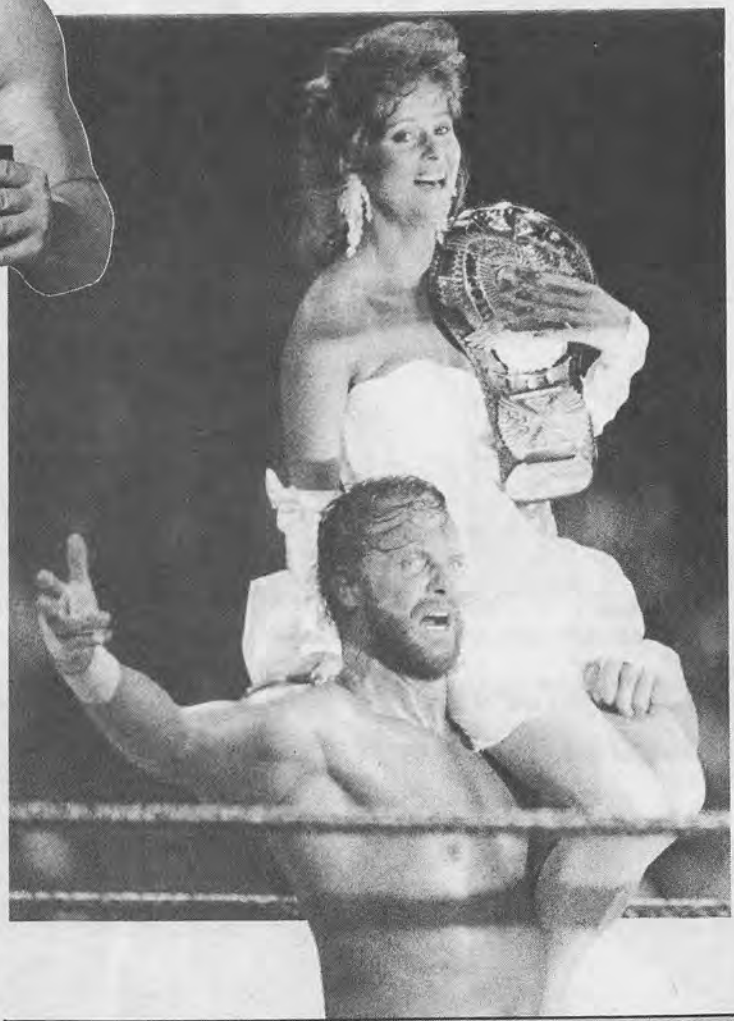
WWF President Jack Tunney ordered the title held up, and Randy Savage won a tournament to earn the belt at WrestleMania V in 1988. The "Macho Man" resumed rulebreaking after attacking Hogan—which led Hogan back to the title the next year. The Ultimate Warrior shocked the world by beating the "Hulkster" at WrestleMania VI—the first time Hogan had been legitimately pinned in eight years!

Sgt. Slaughter used outside interference by Savage to unseat Warrior at the Royal Rumble in January, which led to Hogan's record-breaking third title win at WrestleMania VII on March 24 in Los Angeles.

Twenty-eight years after its formation, the WWF is acknowledged as the largest federation in the U.S.—and the World title has been held by some of the finest competitors in the sport. Now, relive every title change in the history of the WWF with this special photo retrospective. It's the next best thing to having a ringside seat for every history-making match!

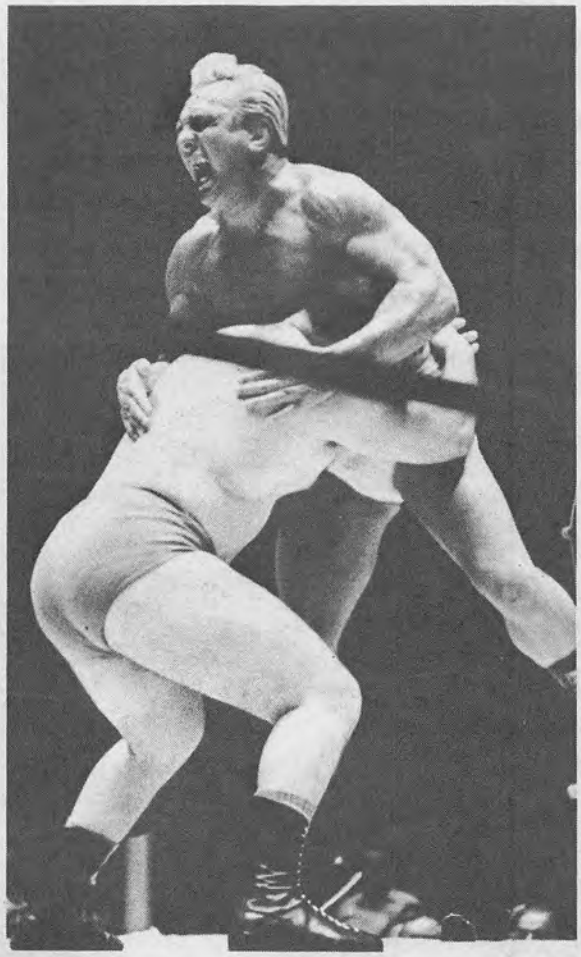


From legendary Buddy Rogers through Bruno Sammartino to the incredible Hulk Hogan, the WWF World title has been held by some of the greatest wrestlers ever. Join us for this exclusive photo feature, which traces the history of the WWF belt from its origins 28 years ago through to Hogan's third World title!

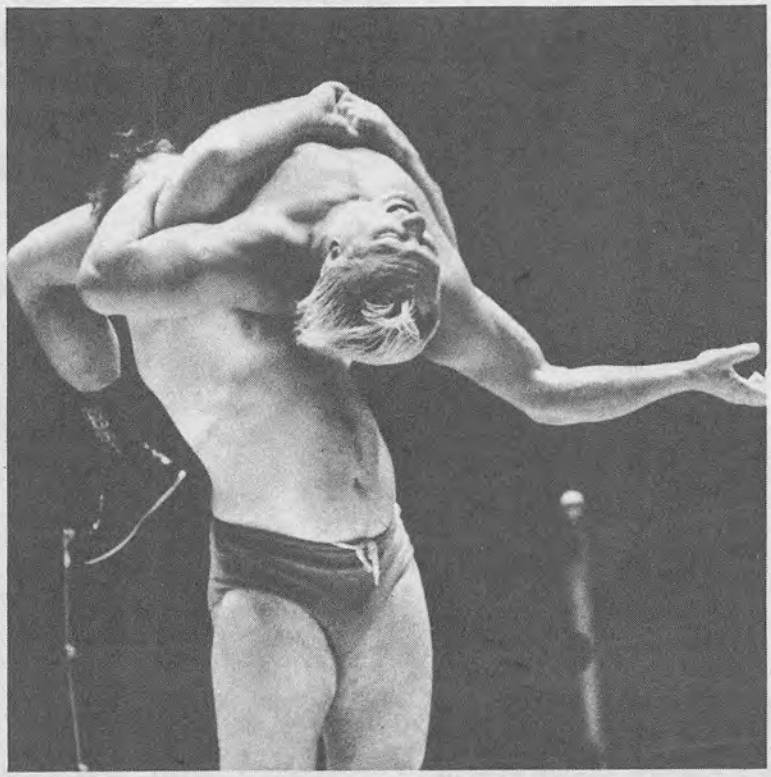


WWF HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Bruno Sammartino	Buddy Rogers	New York	05-17-63
Ivan Koloff	Bruno Sammartino	New York	01-18-71
Pedro Morales	Ivan Koloff	New York	02-08-71
Stan Stasiak	Pedro Morales	Philadelphia	12-01-73
Bruno Sammartino	Stan Stasiak	New York	12-10-73
Superstar Graham	Bruno Sammartino	Baltimore	04-30-77
Bob Backlund	Superstar Graham	New York	02-20-78
The Iron Sheik	Bob Backlund	New York	12-26-83
Hulk Hogan	Iron Sheik	New York	01-23-84
Andre the Giant	Hulk Hogan	Indianapolis	02-05-88
Randy Savage	Ted DiBiase	Atlantic City, NJ	03-27-88
Hulk Hogan	Randy Savage	Atlantic City, NJ	04-02-89
Ultimate Warrior	Hulk Hogan	Toronto	04-01-90
Sgt. Slaughter	Ultimate Warrior	Miami	01-19-91
Hulk Hogan	Sgt. Slaughter	Los Angeles	03-24-91

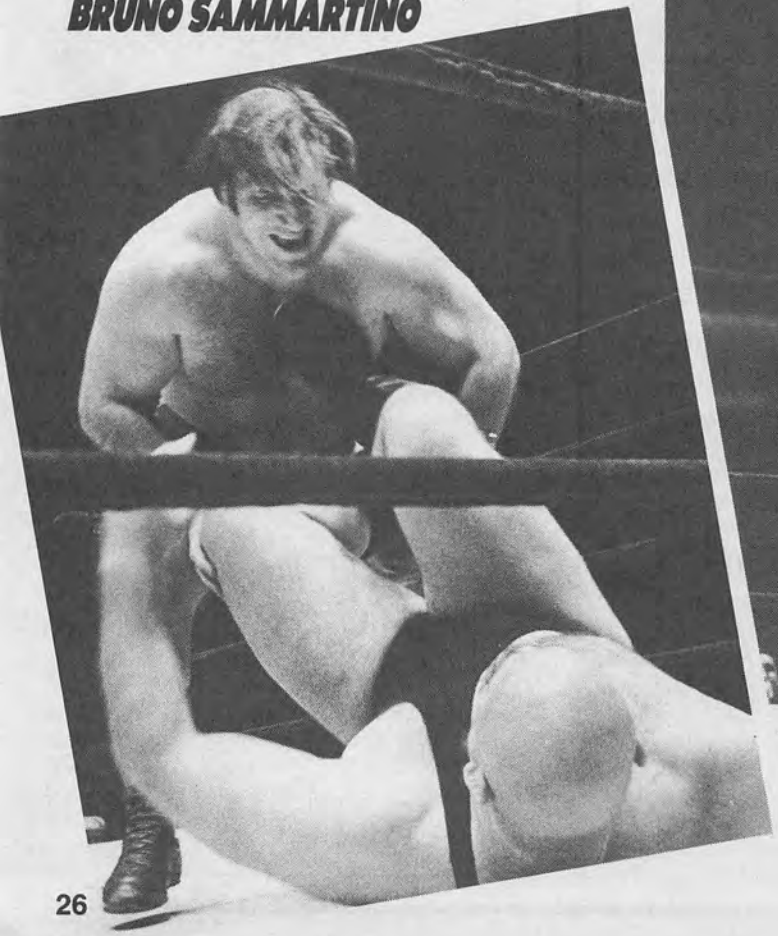


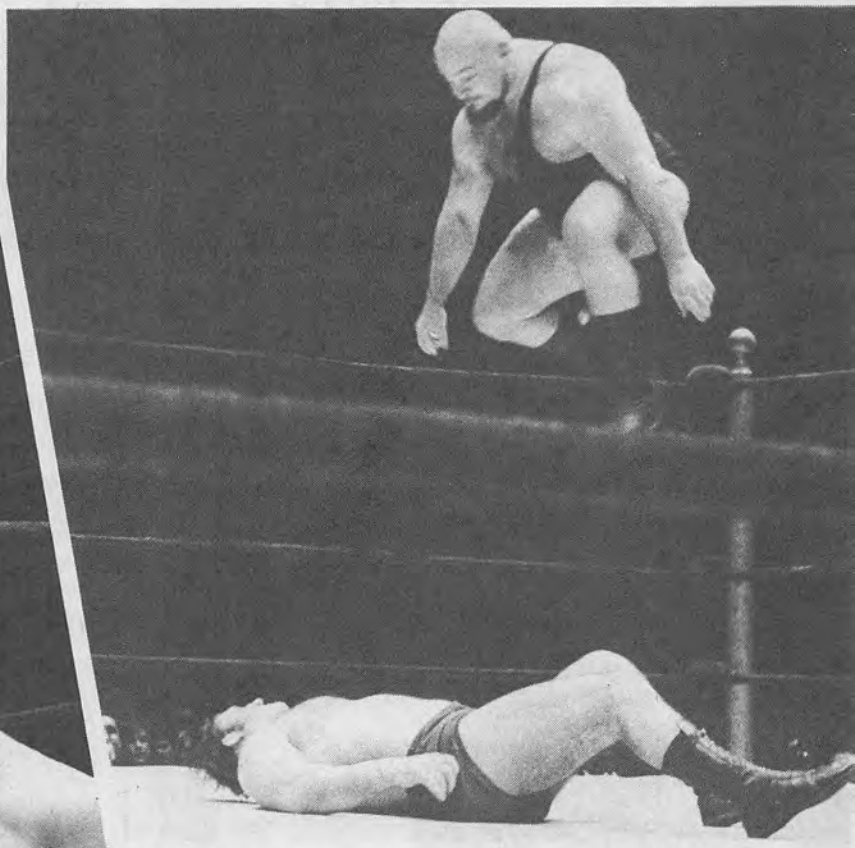
BRUNO SAMMARTINO VS. BUDDY ROGERS



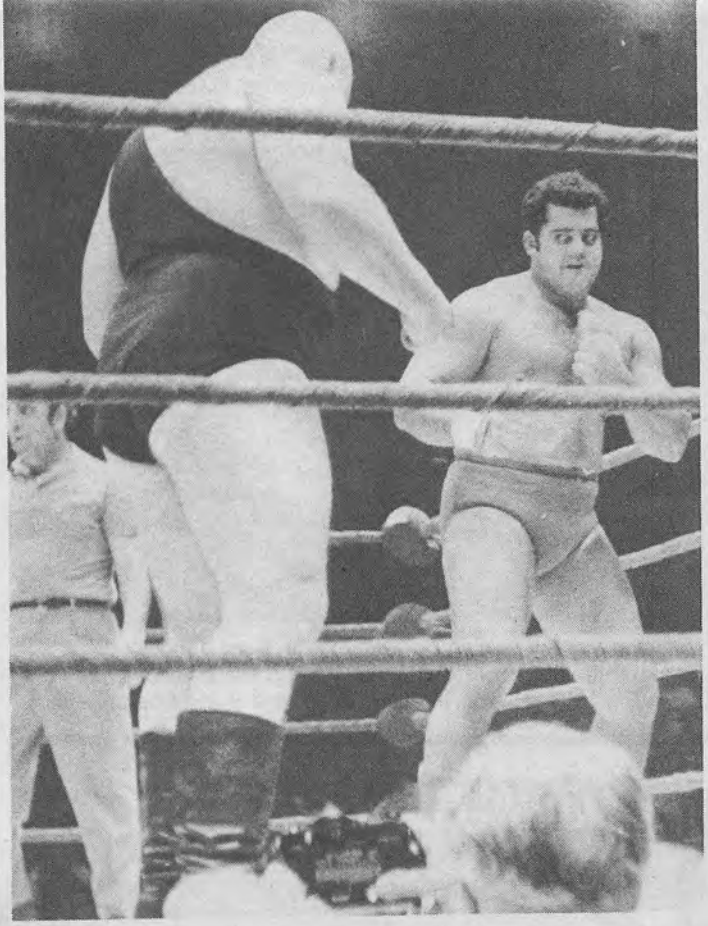
It took Sammartino only 48 seconds to capture Rogers in a bearhug (left) and put him away with a backbreaker (above). Who could have known that night that Sammartino was beginning a 7½-year reign?

IVAN KOLOFF VS. BRUNO SAMMARTINO





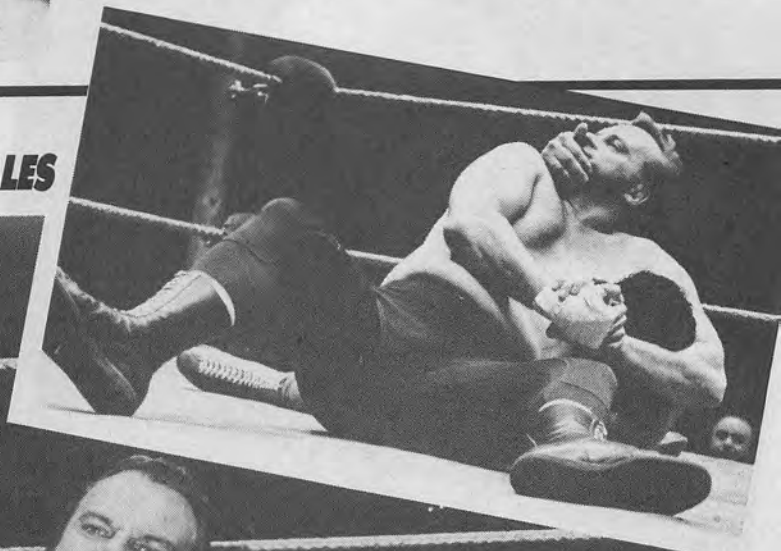
Bruno thought he had challenger Koloff at his mercy (left), but after a kneedrop off the top rope (above), the Russian scored the shocking pinfall. The crowd was stunned into silence.

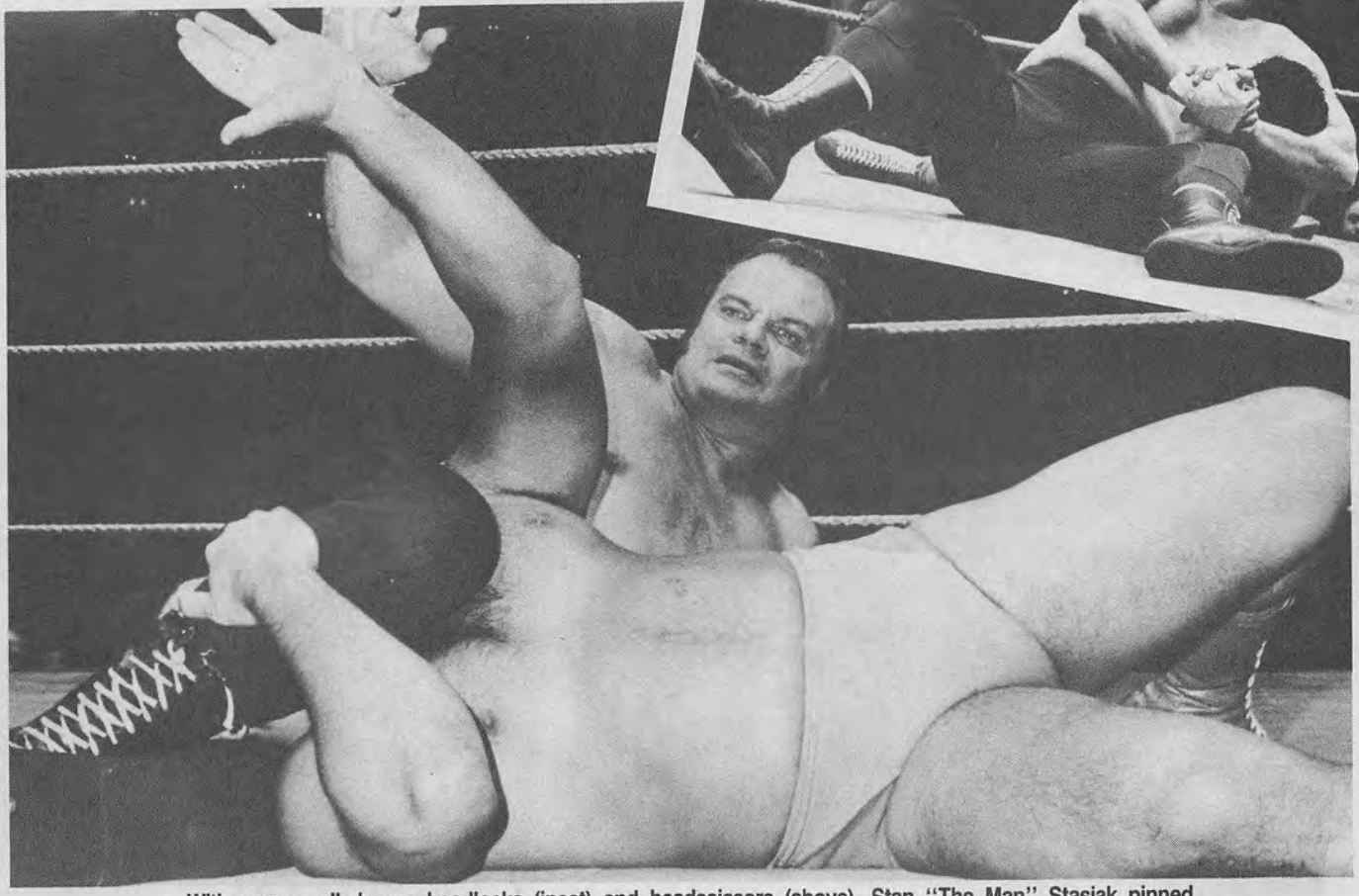


PEDRO MORALES VS. IVAN KOLOFF

Koloff was champion for three weeks when he faced the challenge of Puerto Rican star Pedro Morales, who stood up to the "Russian Bear" and ended his title reign.

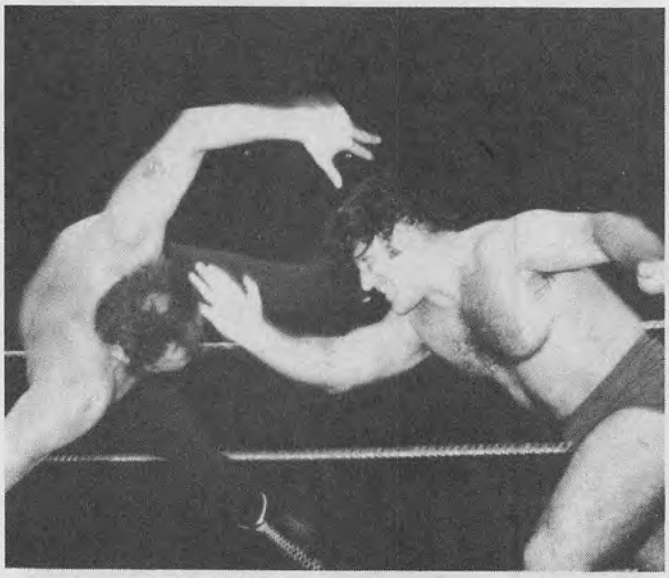
STAN STASIAK VS. PEDRO MORALES





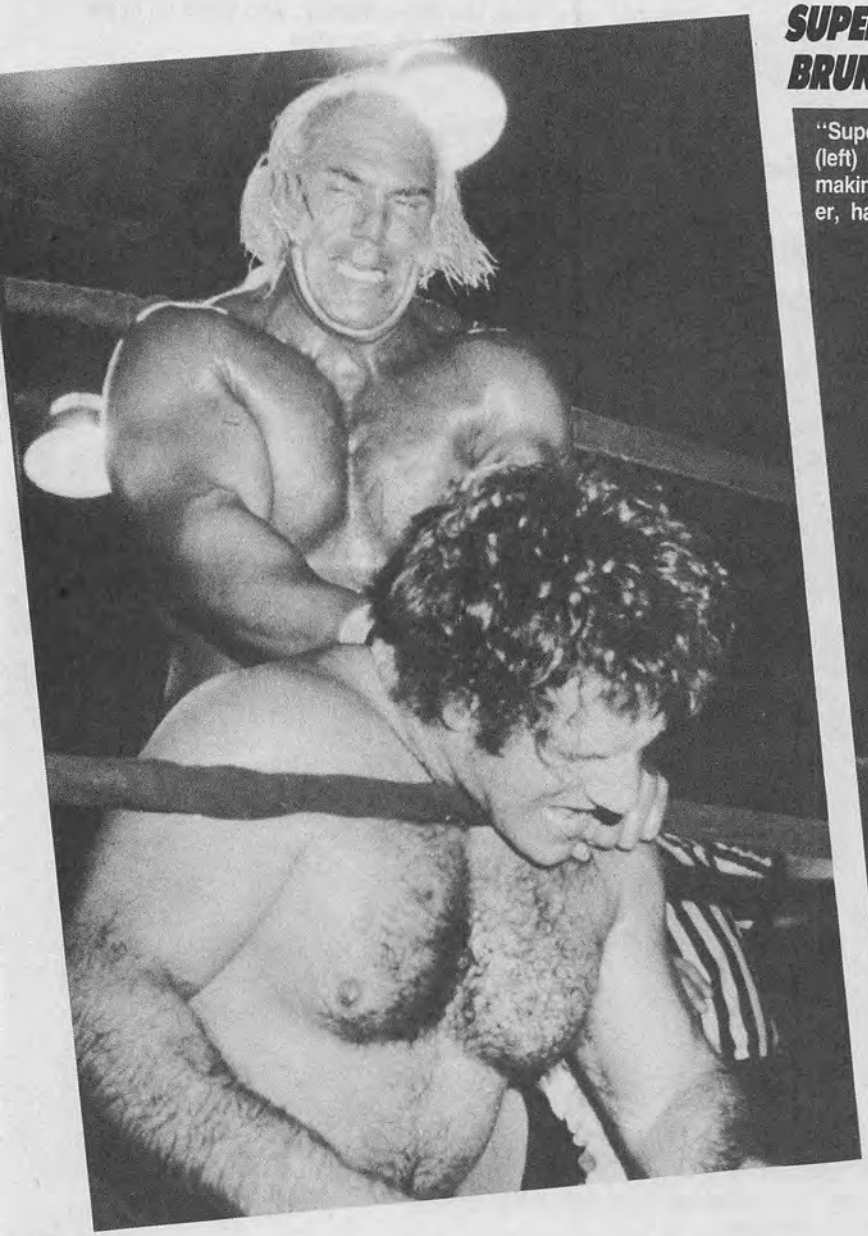
With some well-chosen headlocks (inset) and headscissors (above), Stan "The Man" Stasiak pinned Morales to become the fifth WWF World champion.

BRUNO SAMMARTINO VS. STAN STASIAK

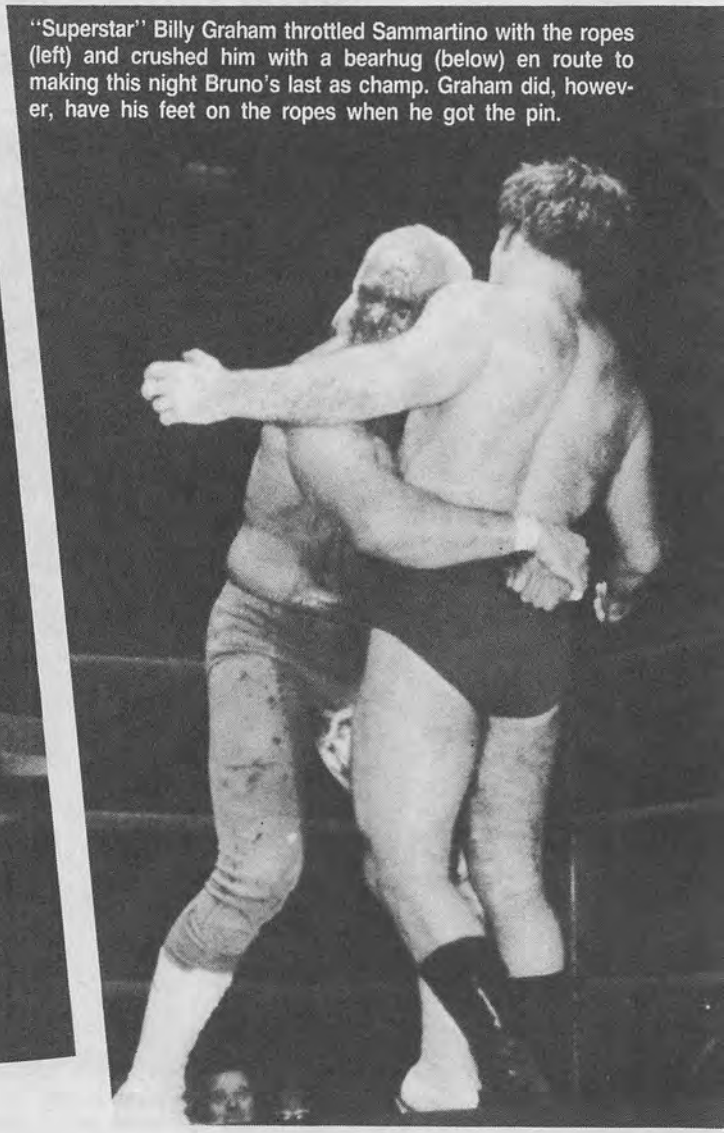


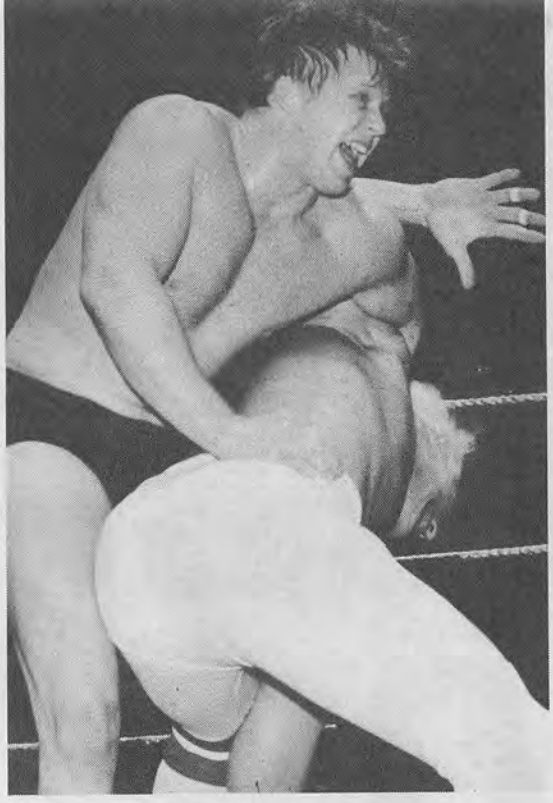
Nine days after beating Morales, Stasiak faced a fired-up Sammartino (left). Stasiak held a temporary advantage (above), but the "Living Legend" won the bout to become a two-time champion.

SUPERSTAR GRAHAM VS. BRUNO SAMMARTINO

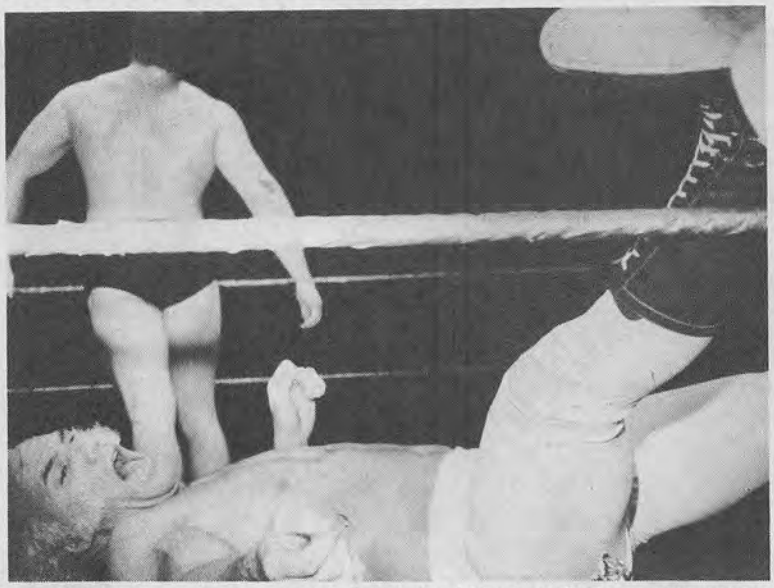


"Superstar" Billy Graham throttled Sammartino with the ropes (left) and crushed him with a bearhug (below) en route to making this night Bruno's last as champ. Graham did, however, have his feet on the ropes when he got the pin.





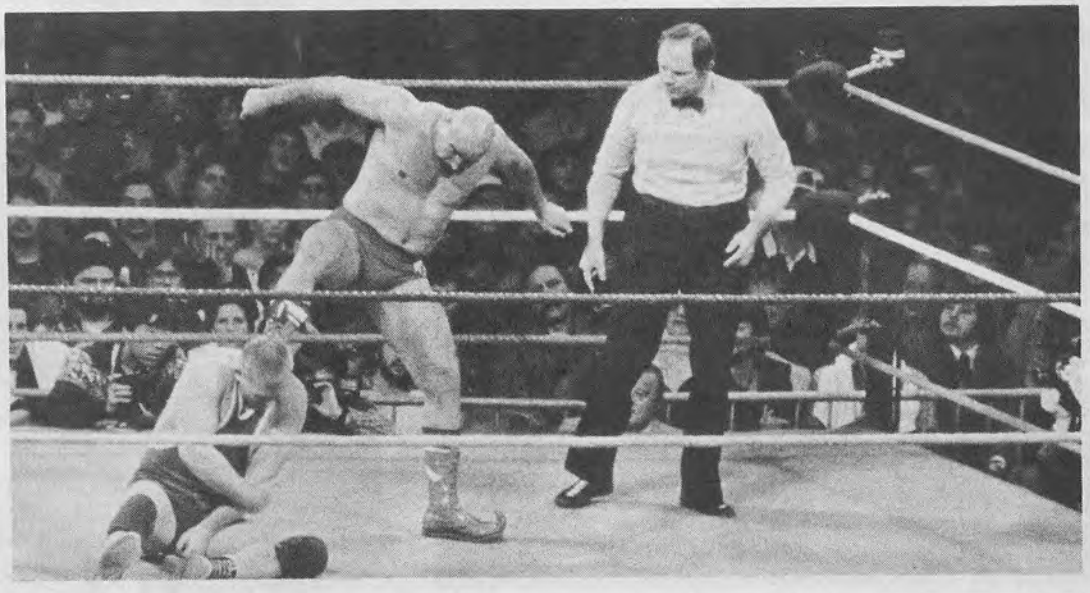
BOB BACKLUND VS. SUPERSTAR GRAHAM

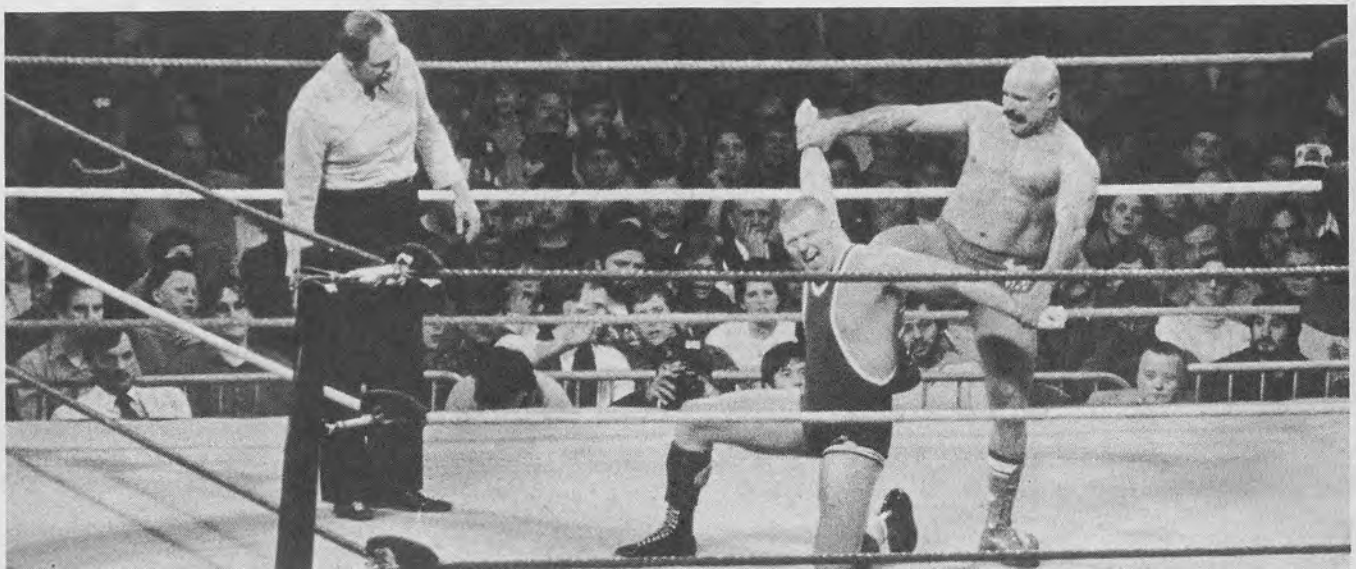


Bob Backlund's abdominal stretch (left) helped him beat Graham, who protested the pin shouldn't have counted because his foot was on the ropes (above). But the decision stood, and the WWF had an honorable champion once more.

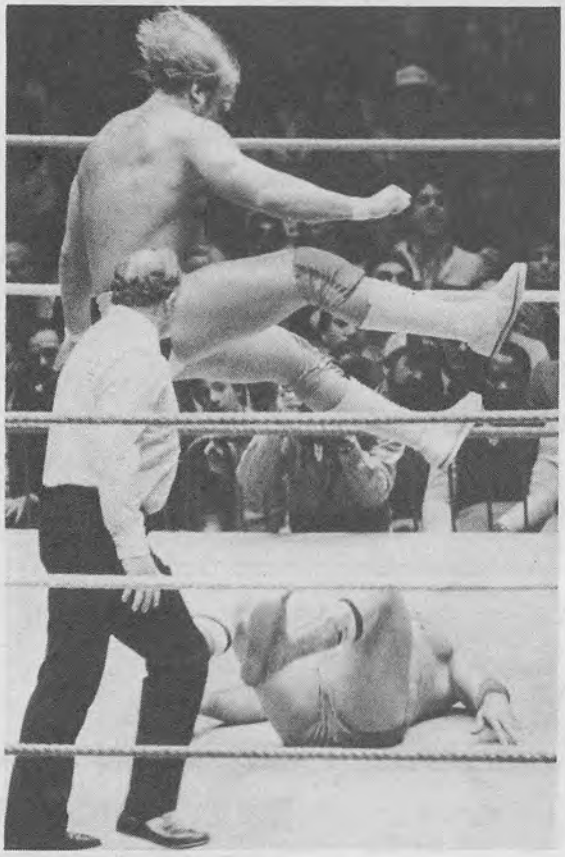
THE IRON SHEIK VS. BOB BACKLUND

The nefarious Iron Sheik stomped Backlund with his loaded boot (right) and worked on his previously injured back with a crucifix (below). When Sheik maneuvered Backlund into a camel clutch, Backlund's manager, Arnold Skaaland, threw in the towel, ending Backlund's five-year, 10-month reign.



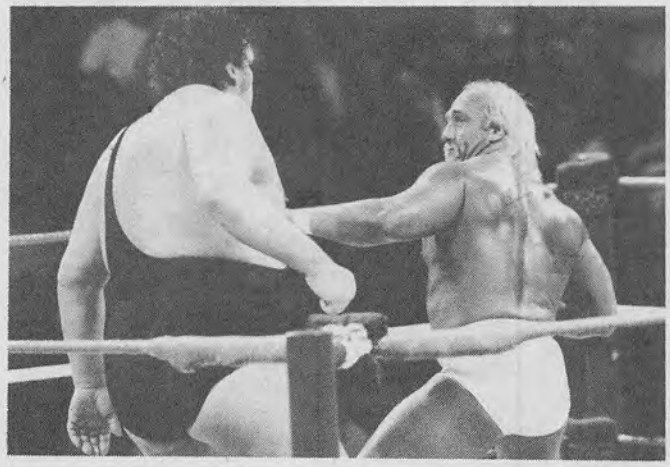


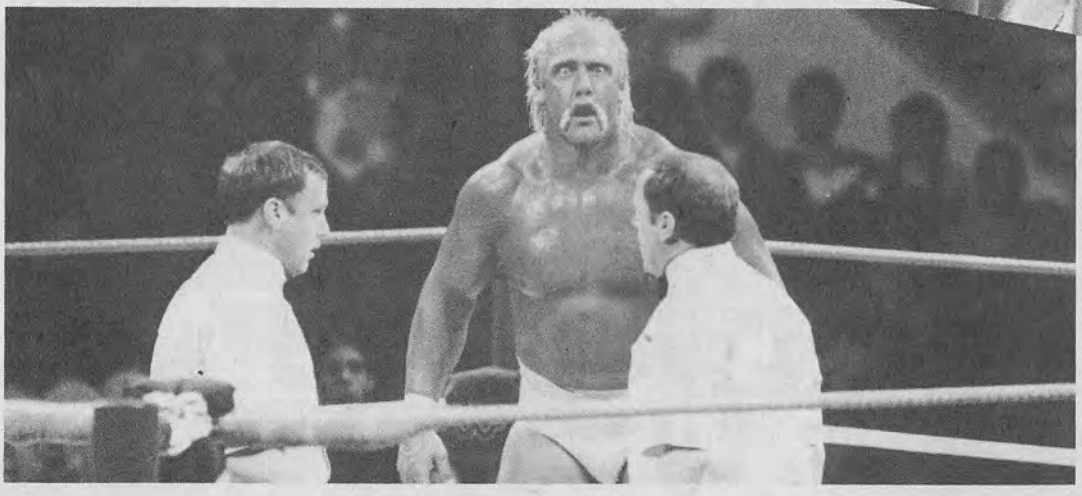
HULK HOGAN VS. IRON SHEIK



Hulk Hogan stormed the ring to batter the Sheik (above). With a mighty legdrop (right), Hogan pinned the Iranian. Hulk immediately captured the hearts of a nation of wrestling fans.

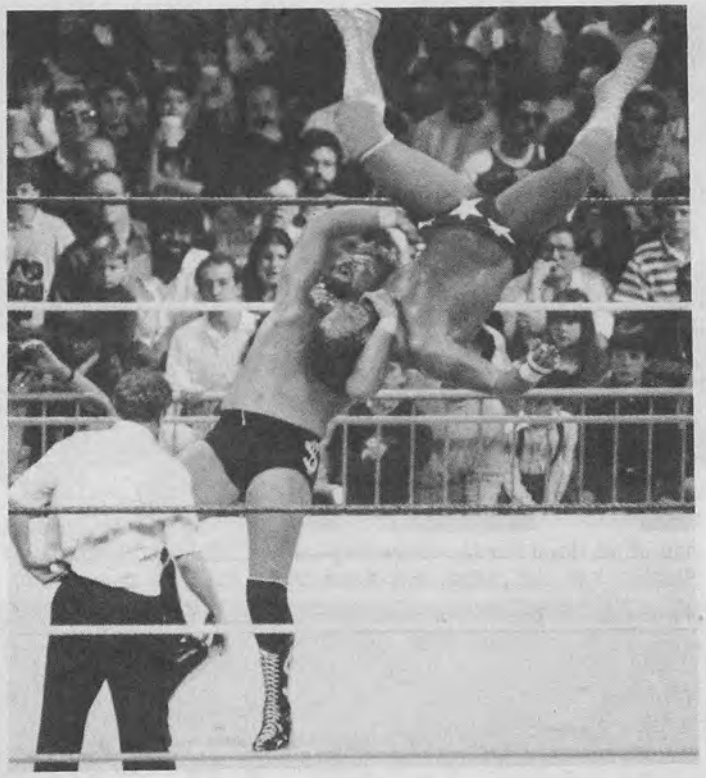
ANDRE THE GIANT VS. HULK HOGAN

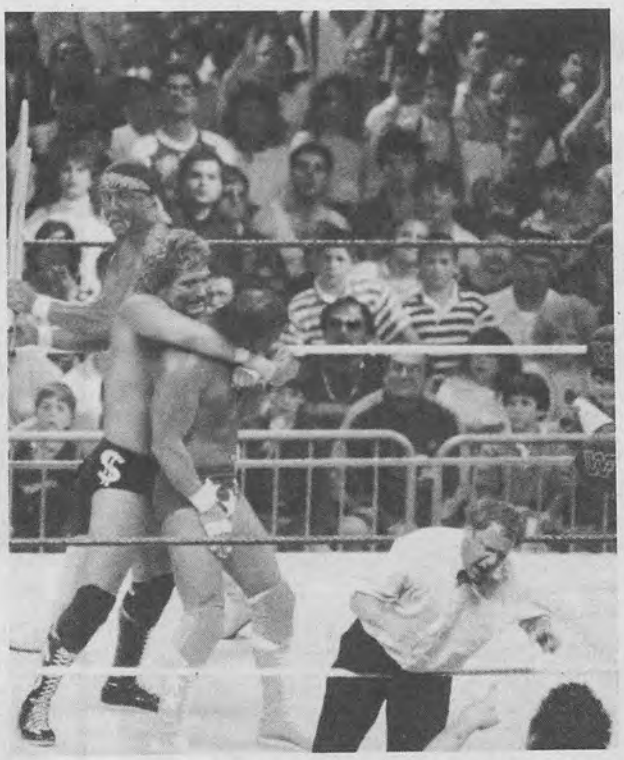




After being humiliated by Hogan at WrestleMania III a year earlier, Andre the Giant finally received another shot at the "Hulkster" (top left). As Hogan argued with the "evil twin" referee who cost him the title (left), Andre strapped the championship belt around Ted DiBiase's waist (above). The title was later vacated.

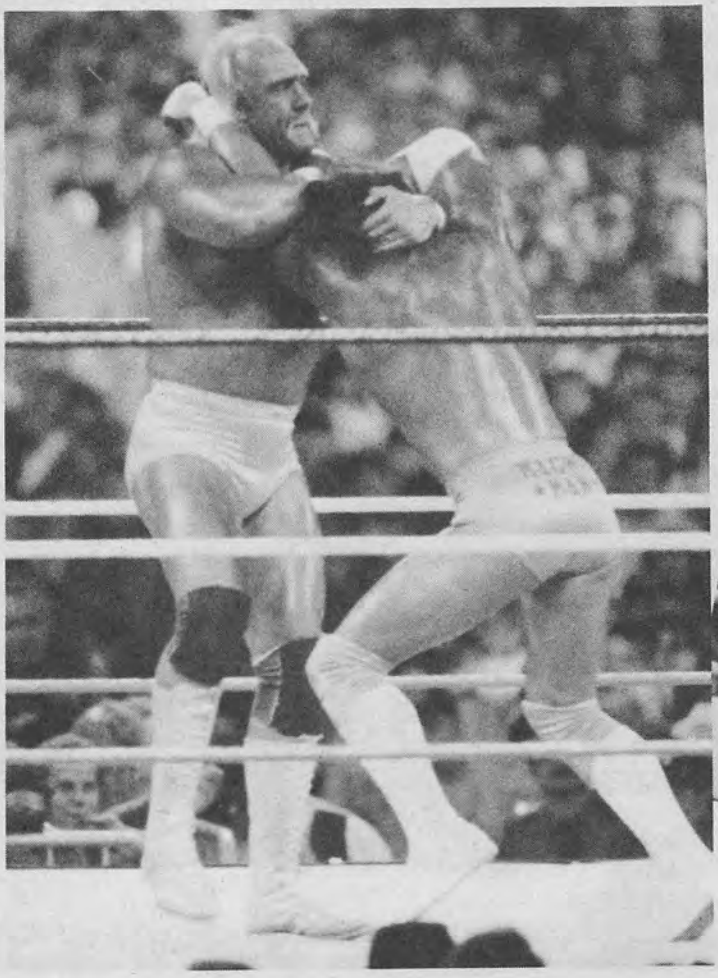
RANDY SAVAGE VS. TED DiBIASE

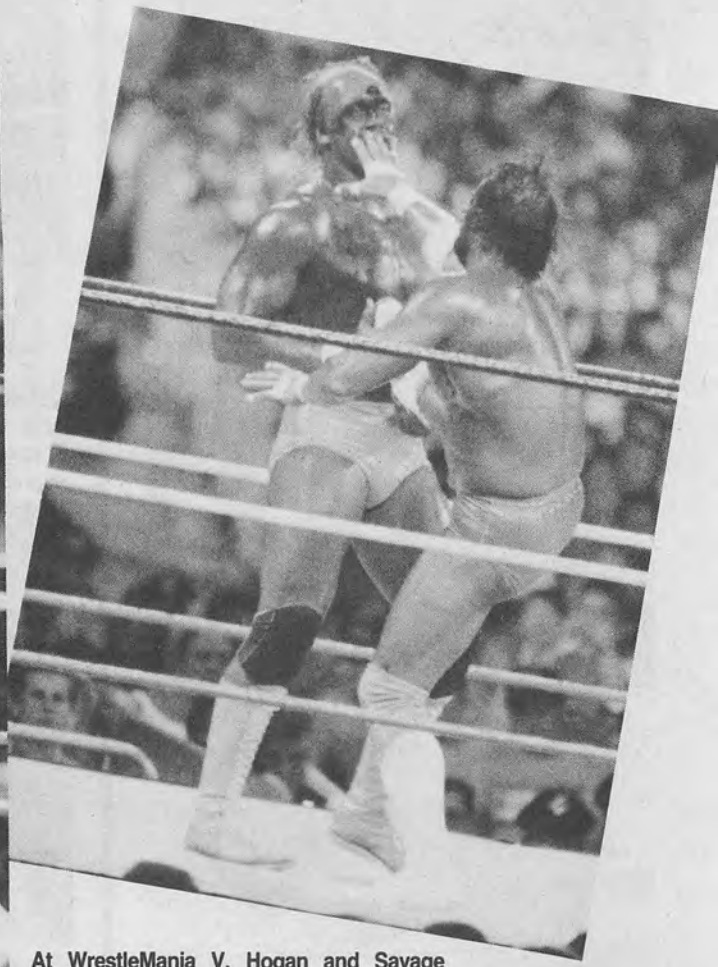




In the WrestleMania IV title tournament, DiBiase squared off against Randy Savage (left). Hogan used a steel chair to gain revenge on DiBiase (above) and help Savage win the belt.

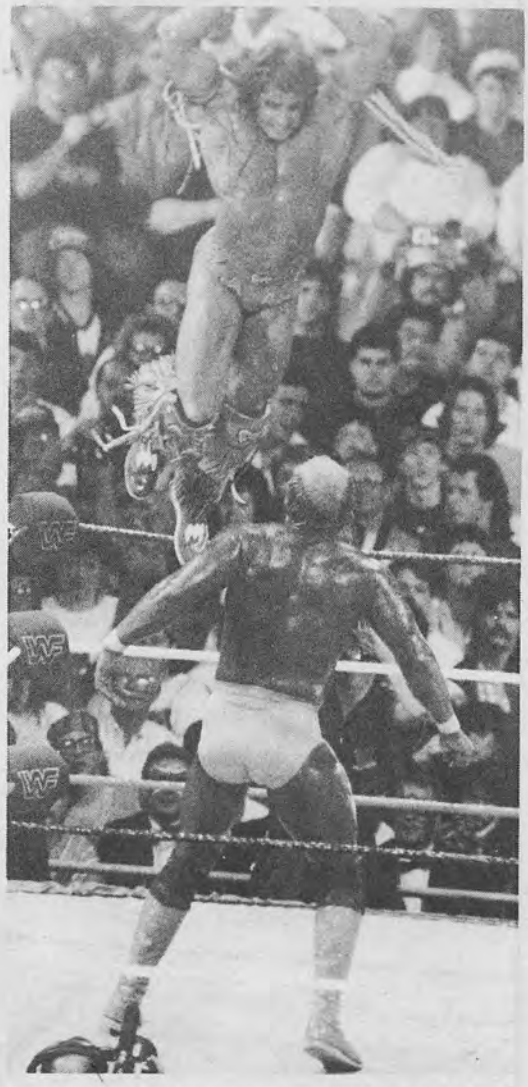
HULK HOGAN VS. RANDY SAVAGE



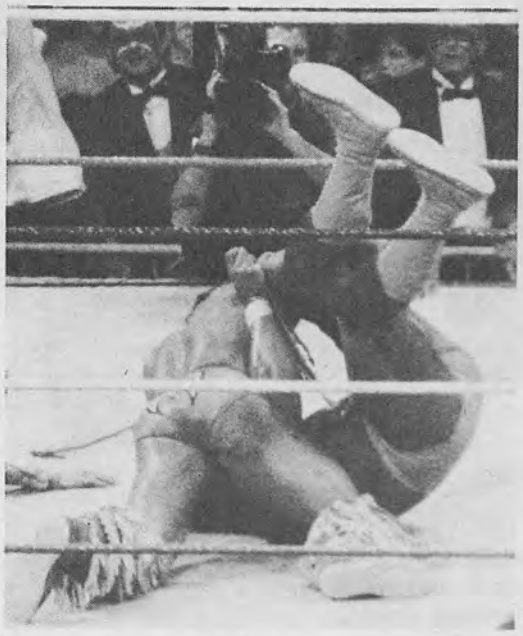


At WrestleMania V, Hogan and Savage were not friends, but foes. This time, the "Hulkster" emerged victorious.

ULTIMATE WARRIOR VS. HULK HOGAN

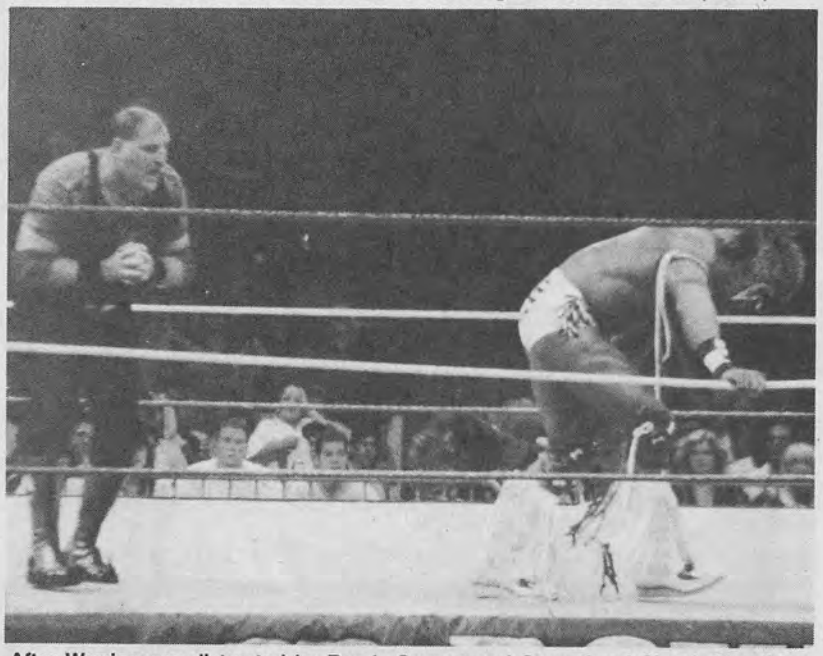


In WrestleMania VI's main event, Ultimate Warrior pounced on Hulk (above) and pinned him (below), one of the few times Hulk's been cleanly pinned.

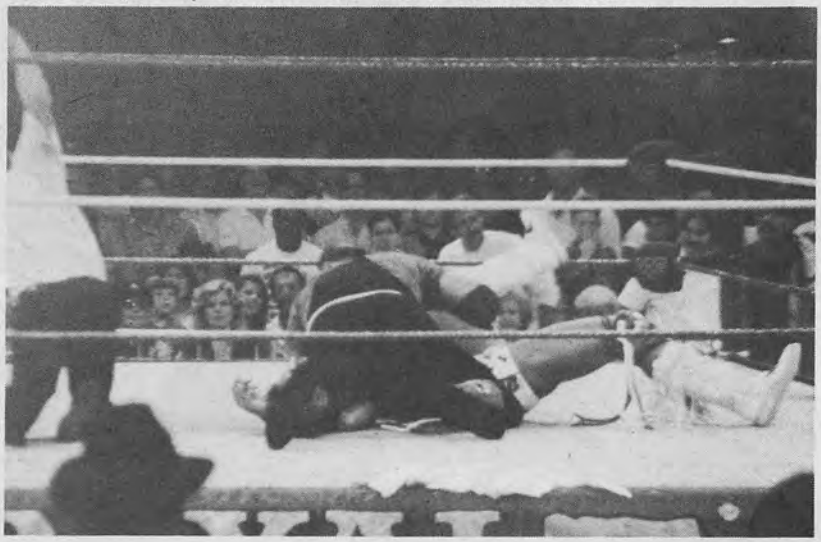


SGT. SLAUGHTER VS. ULTIMATE WARRIOR

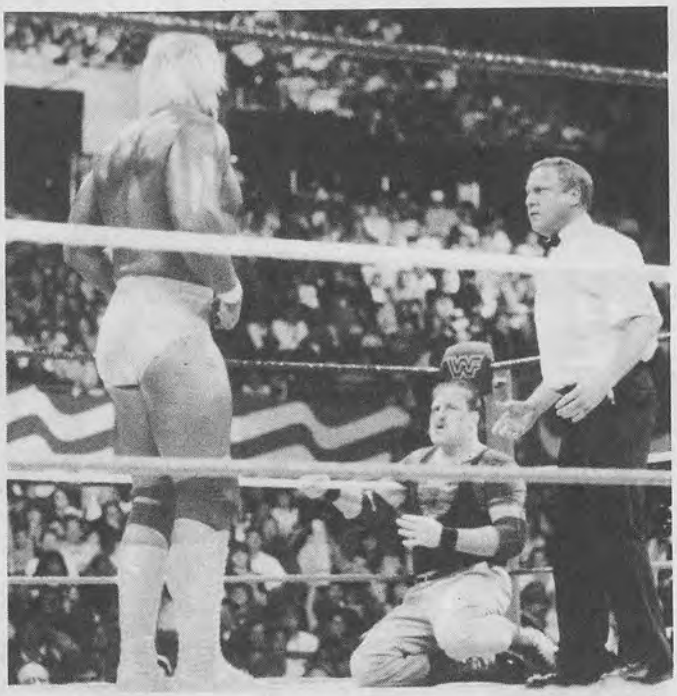
At the start of his Royal Rumble defense against Sgt. Slaughter, Warrior tried to knock Slaughter and Gen. Adnan out of the ring at the same time (above).



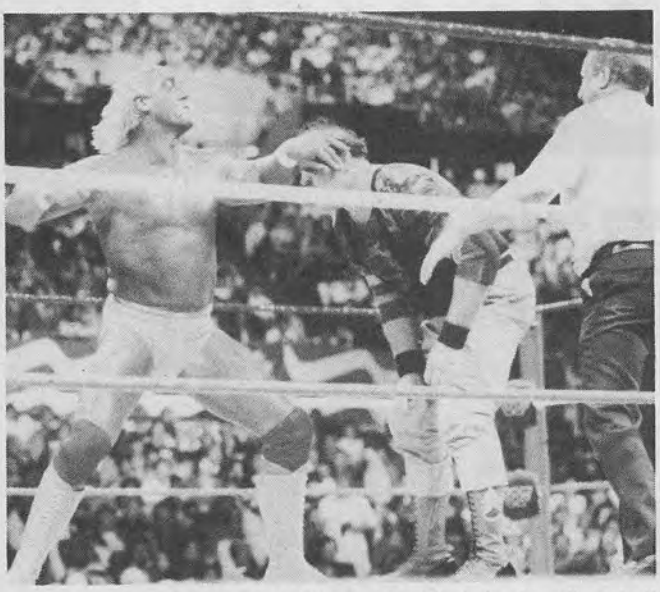
After Warrior was distracted by Randy Savage and Sensational Sherri, Slaughter attacked quickly (above). The pin (below) put the belt in the hands of a man who expressed pro-Iraq sentiments at a time of international war.

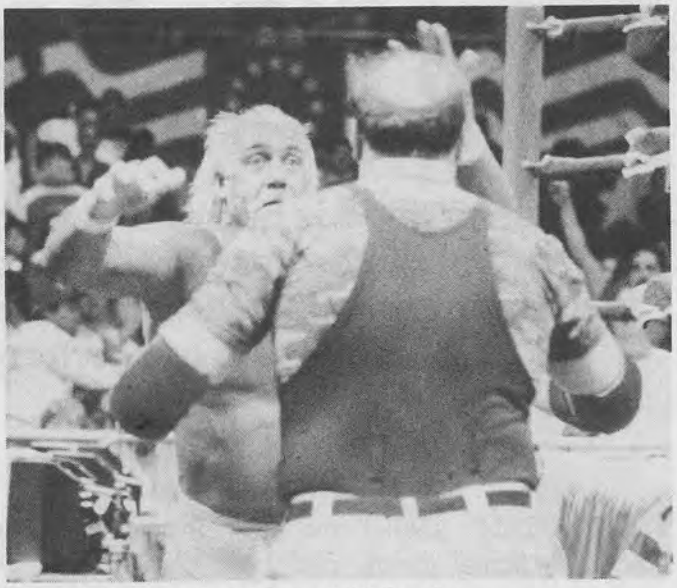


HULK HOGAN VS. SGT. SLAUGHTER

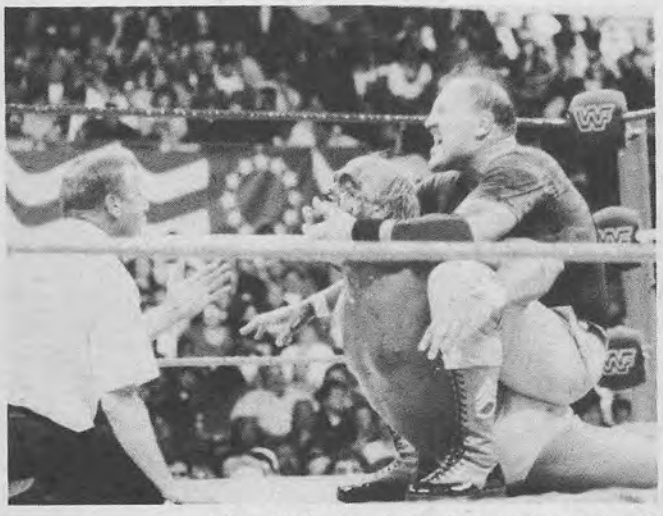


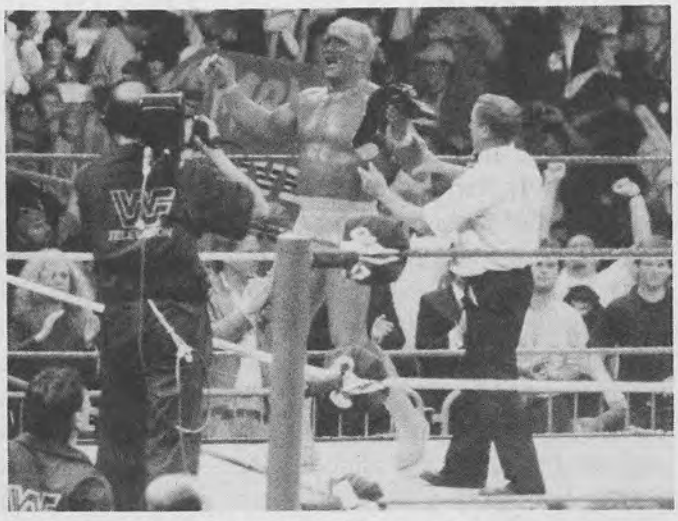
Hogan received the WrestleMania VII title match against Slaughter, and didn't let up on him for a second (above and right).





The "Hulkster" controlled the brawling, both in (above left) and out of (above right) the ring. Adnan could only offer Slaughter minimal help.





Slaughter's camel clutch severely weakened Hogan (above left), but Hulk rallied to become the only man to hold the WWF title three times.

LEX LUGE

HIS ONLY GOOD FUTURE IS A BAD FUTURE

Sometimes good is bad and sometimes bad is good. That's the case with U.S. champion Lex Luger, who is following a straight-and-narrow path to nowhere

By David Rosenbaum

THEY TALK ABOUT the attitude. Some things can be worked on: Strength can be gained, skill can be acquired, learning and hard work can pay great dividends. But what about the attitude?

It's a gift. Some people have it, some don't. In sports, nothing is more deadly than an athlete with skill and the attitude to go along with it, the attitude that says, "You can't beat me."

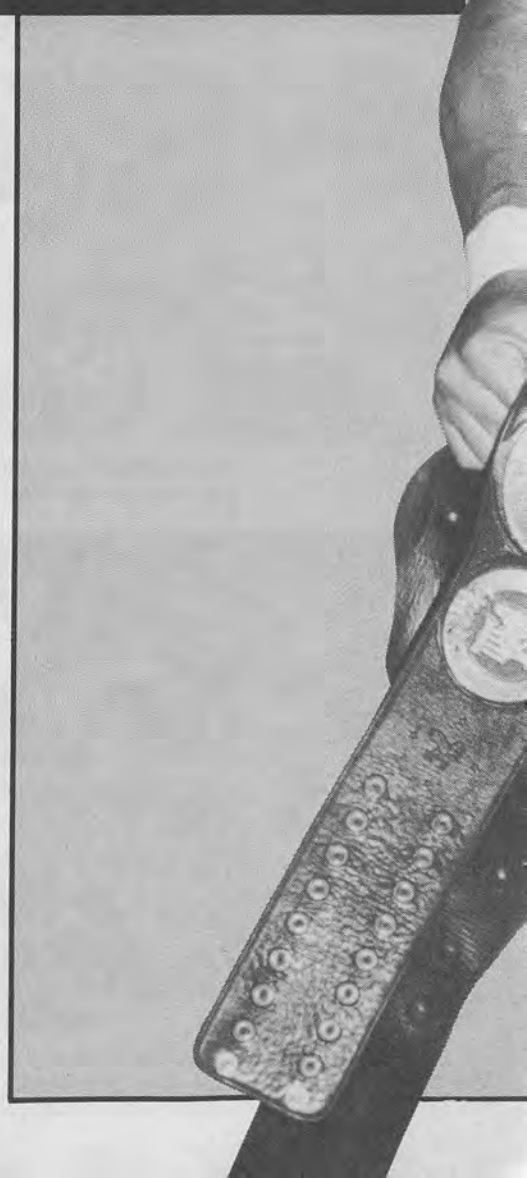
Maybe there were doubts about Lex Luger's wrestling ability during his rookie year in Florida back in 1985, but there certainly weren't any doubts about his attitude. He had it. He flaunted it.

And it's still there. There are times when watching a Luger match that it's hard to remember whether he's a fan favorite or a rulebreaker. That's exactly the point. He has the attitude. He doesn't hide it.

Then one remembers that Luger, attitude and all, is a fan favorite. The air of arrogance he carries around does not translate into aggressive ring behavior or domination of his opponents. The attitude can't be mistaken, but sometimes it isn't utilized properly.

It's almost as if there's a part of Luger scratching at the surface and trying to get out, as if Luger's very skin is trying to restrain a part of him that needs to be exposed.

"It's hard to be a man," six-time former World champion Lou Thesz once said, "unless you're true to



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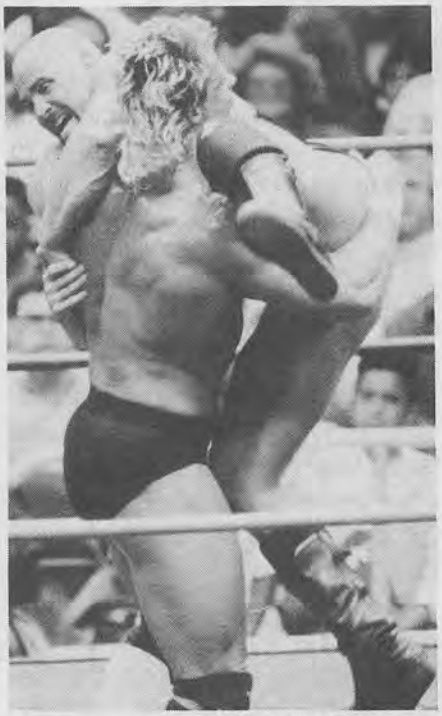


Luger may need a nastier attitude if he's to fend off the challenge of Nikita Koloff.

yourself."

Fans and the media want the best for Luger. He is a special athlete. The WCW U.S. champion possesses incredible strength, size, and skill. He has developed tremendously as a wrestler over the past several years.

And, as supporters of Luger, we want to see him be his best. We would like to see him follow the straight-and-narrow. It is so disappointing when wrestlers take the wrong path to greatness.

That's where the enigma comes in. Luger is a fan favorite. Twice in his career Luger has been a rulebreaker, but he has changed his ways. He is one of the most popular wrestlers in the sport.

Ironically, however, the path of good might not be the best for Luger. He might be one of those rare athletes born for rulebreaking. It is unfortunate, but Luger's best future might be as a bad man.

As we said, he has the attitude. He knows he is nearly unbeatable, but he doesn't implement the attitude. He doesn't wrestle like he thinks and acts.

"Luger clearly lacks the killer instinct, which is amazing for a man

with his size and skill," said WCW World champion Ric Flair. "I can see it in his eyes sometimes. He just doesn't go in for the kill, even though he knows he can do it. He always seems to be holding back. If you're going to reach the top in this sport, you have to start styling and profiling. You have to be aggressive."

Flair should know. He is a seven-time World champion. He has faced Luger several times, and has often been on the verge of defeat. Almost every time, Luger allowed Flair to escape.

There are many experts who claim Luger was stung by his previous stints as a rulebreaker, a theory with considerable validity. Luger was criticized greatly for his actions as a member of The Four Horsemen and, clearly, Luger made a mistake by joining this evil clique.

Luger was booed by the fans and chastised by wrestling officials. Most importantly, he sold his soul to the Horsemen. This group was exactly what Luger didn't need. He doesn't need a group, all he needs is himself.

With the Horsemen, he sacrificed his individuality and his great desire to succeed. As a fan favorite, he is sacrificing his attitude, his killer instinct.

He needs to find a middle ground. Right now, Luger is too nice. While Luger defends the U.S. title, Sting and El Gigante have taken shots at Flair's World title. Those should be Luger's title shots. He is the rightful number-one contender to the WCW World title.

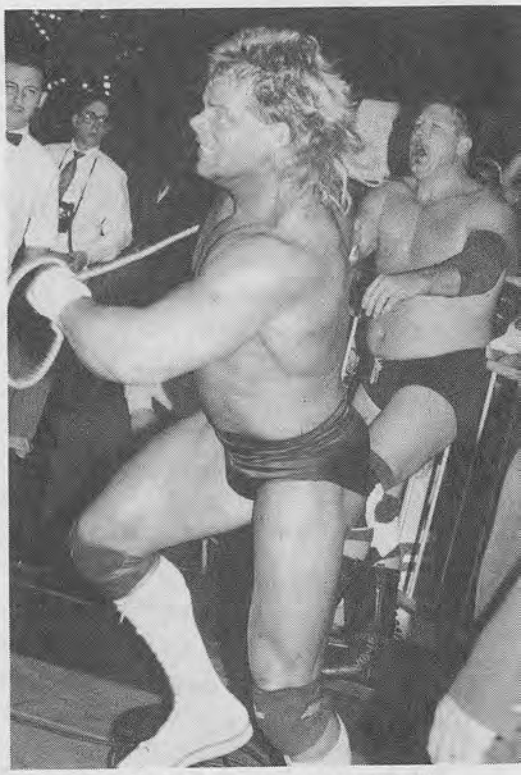
Instead, he continues to step aside and let Sting and El Gigante grab the glory. Who's next? Probably Barry Windham. And how about Sid Vicious?

Is Luger about to be left behind?

He was left off the joint WCW/New Japan card at the Tokyo Dome, one of the biggest

Luger turned back Sid Vicious' challenge (above), but it may be *Vicious* who gets more shots at WCW World champion Ric Flair, whom Luger battled frequently in the past (below).

Lex and Sting are friends now, but it wasn't always like that (above). Luger threatens "Dangerous" Dan Spivey with a chair (below). For Luger, winning the World title could mean a return to such tactics on a regular basis.



The "Total Package" displayed an incredible amount of aggressiveness in regaining the U.S. title from Stan Hansen.

cards (and paydays) of the year. It has been ages since he got a shot at Flair's title. Luger is running on a treadmill.

The time has come for Luger to bust a few chairs, rattle a few brains, cause a few heads to turn, do things *his* way! All the promise of his 1985 rookie season is fading away. We're losing touch with the real Lex Luger, a mean, strong man who didn't care who he hurt, who never let anyone get in his way.

That's the Luger that should have won the World title by now. It's the Luger we don't want to see, but must see—or else this promise will remain unfulfilled.

Luger is a confused man who doesn't know which way to turn. "My career isn't going in any set direction right now," he recently admitted in a moment of candor. "It seems like I'm not going forward, like I'm just running in place."

That's not the Luger way. It's time for a change, and a change for the worst would be a change for the best. □

WHY ULTIMATE WARRIOR IS LEADING THE DRIVE TO BRING BACK RANDY

By Kostya Kennedy

COULD IT BE? After all that's been said and done, could The Ultimate Warrior actually be fighting for Randy Savage's rights?

Sounds crazy, but that's exactly what's happening.

At Wrestlemania VII, in the celebrated loser-must-retire match, Warrior used a pair of tremendous shouldertackles to render Savage inert. When Warrior stepped on Savage's chest to confirm the pin, Savage was apparently history. Warrior had won and that meant the end of a fine career for the "Macho King."

Or so it seemed.

Now Warrior is making it known that he wants Savage reinstated. So much for gloating in victory! In fact, Warrior is being practically apologetic.

"The main thing Warrior wanted was to beat Savage," said a source close to Warrior's camp. "Now that he's done that, he's sorry to see Randy gone from the sport. Warrior knows what a great wrestler Randy is, and he thinks he deserves to be let back into wrestling."

The words are particularly striking if we look back to the Royal Rumble on January 19. Ultimate Warrior was defending his WWF World title against Sgt. Slaughter—and doing a fine job of it before Savage stepped in. Along with his manager, Sensational Sherri, Savage interfered with the bout on Slaughter's behalf. There was a heinous sneak-attack in the aisle leading to the dressing room area, but the most damaging blow came when Savage smashed Warrior's head with his scepter. War-

Sensational Sherri may not want Savage to come out of retirement.

Photos by David Fitzgerald

Savage warns Sherri to back off (opposite page top) before he triumphantly reunites with former manager Elizabeth (below).

SAVAGE

Not long ago, Ultimate Warrior and Randy Savage were the most bitter of enemies. Now, after beating Savage in a loser-must-retire match, Warrior is doing the unthinkable—campaigning for Savage's reinstatement!

rior was wounded and severely weakened and Slaughter moved in for the pin that won him the title.

A scepter to the head? Savage pulls a move like *that* and, less than three months later, Warrior is on his side?

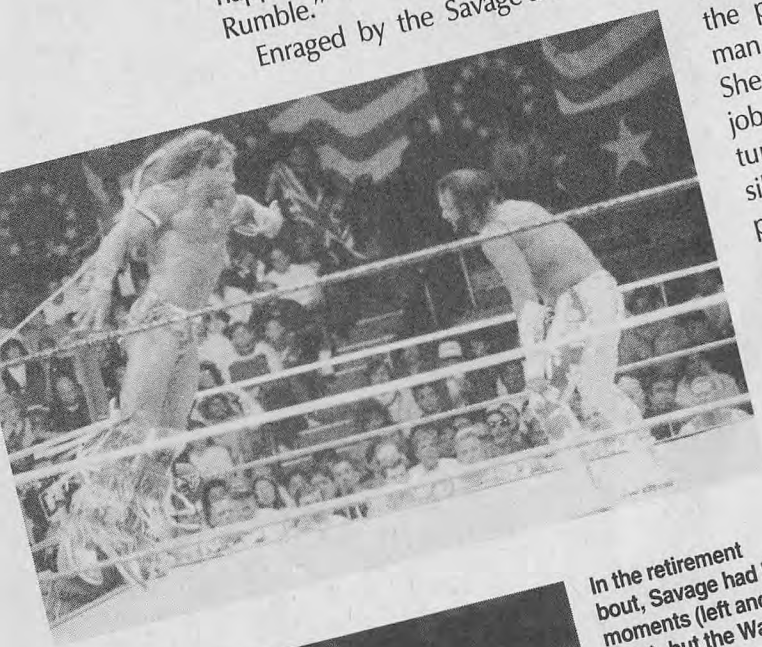
"That was the *old* Randy Savage, at least that's what Warrior thinks," said the source. "Emotions run high in the sport of wrestling, and sometimes people step out of character and do crazy things. That's what happened with Savage at the Rumble."

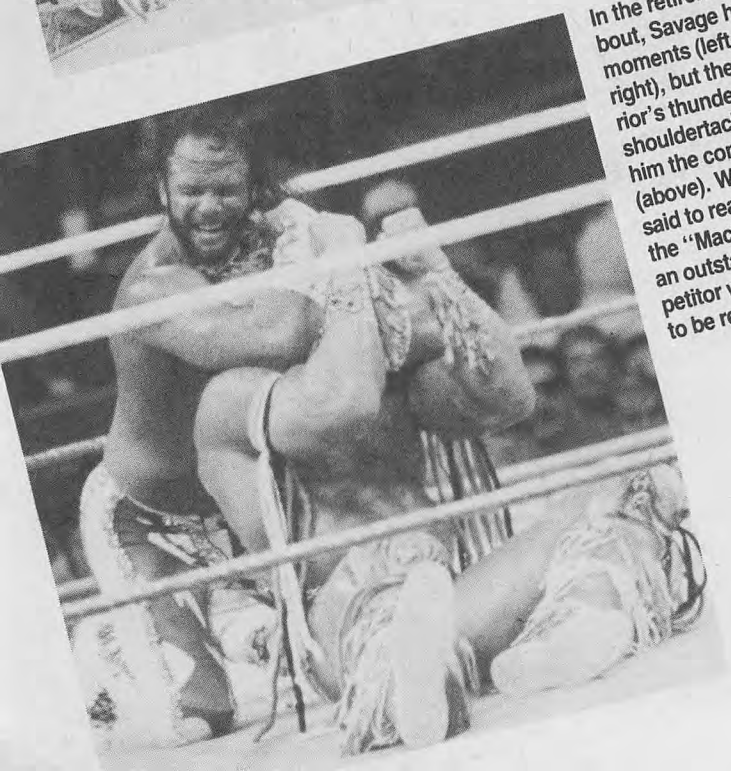
Enraged by the Savage-aided loss, Warrior staged a war of words with the "Macho King." The battle came to a head at Wrestlemania VII and Warrior settled it, ostensibly once and for all. But as he wallowed in the aftermath of victory, Warrior saw what many fans witnessed as well: Savage as a victim and a man with a forgiving heart.

As Savage lay barely conscious on the mat, Sensational Sherri jumped into the ring and began kicking her (former) employer. Then, from ringside, Elizabeth emerged. The beautiful Elizabeth, whose breakup with Savage two years ago was vicious and seemingly final, decided to bury the past and rush to the aid of a man she loves. Elizabeth threw Sherri out of the ring—and toward a job in the Ted DiBiase camp—and turned to face Savage. A moment of silent affection passed before the pair fell into one another's arms.

"Warrior learned two important things from that incident," the source said. "First, he saw how selfish and manipulative Sherri is. That made him think that Randy's badness might have been more Sherri's doing than anything else. She has a way of bringing out the worst in people, and that takes some of the blame off Savage's shoulders.

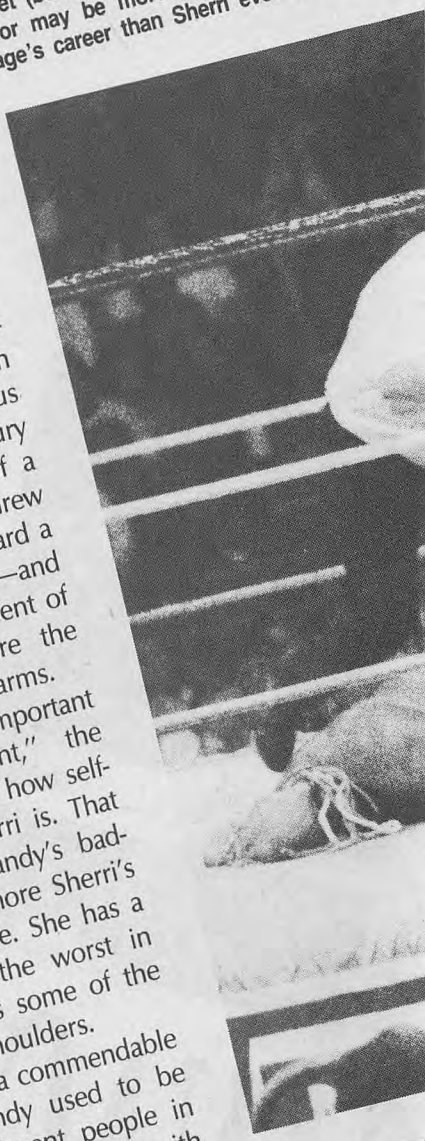
"Warrior also saw a commendable side of Savage. Randy used to be one of the most decent people in the sport. When he reconciled with

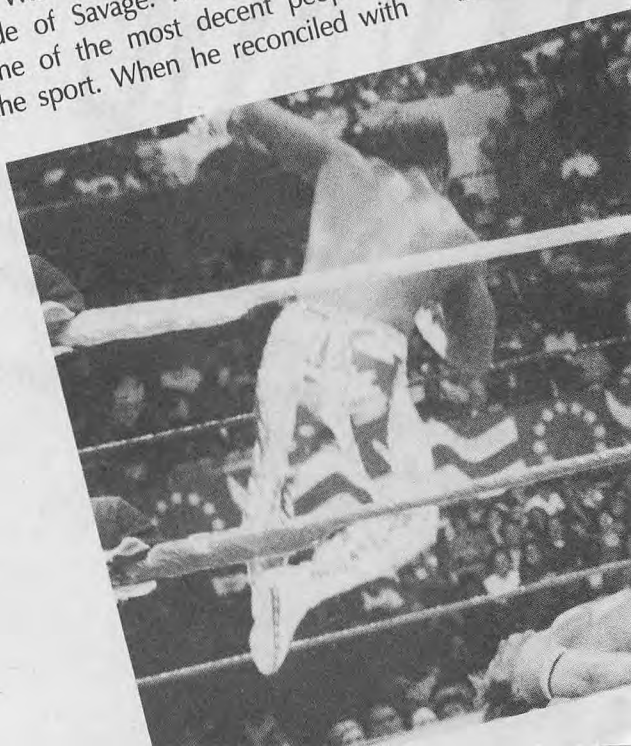


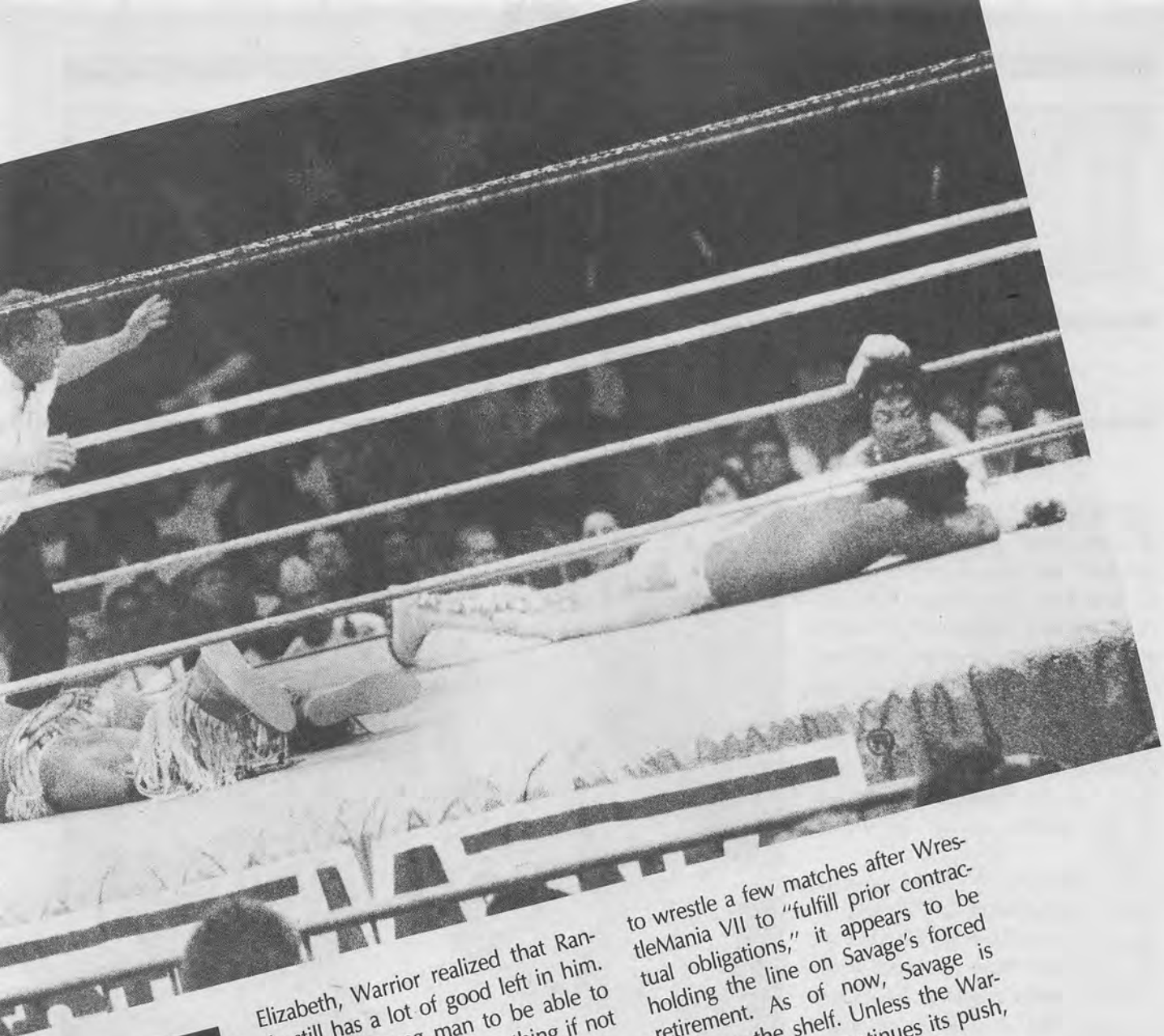


In the retirement bout, Savage had his moments (left and right), but the Warrior's thunderous shouldertackles won him the contest (above). Warrior is said to realize that the "Macho King" is an outstanding competitor who deserves to be reinstated.

Sherri exhorts Savage to get to his feet (below). It turns out that Warrior may be more helpful to Savage's career than Sherri ever was.







Elizabeth, Warrior realized that Randy still has a lot of good left in him. It takes a strong man to be able to forgive, and Warrior is nothing if not a very strong man."

Apart from Savage's attributes as a human being, a main reason for wanting him back is his strength and ability. The wrestling talent pool, though certainly deep, is hardly infinite. Even now, Savage remains among the most capable wrestlers in the world. Fans want to see great wrestling and Savage can provide it.

Indeed, there is an ever-growing number of people—wrestlers, managers, and fans—who want Savage back. People look around and see that there are only so many contenders in the federation. It would create a lot of excitement to throw a talent like Randy Savage back into the mix. Though the WWF allowed Savage to wrestle a few matches after WrestleMania VII to "fulfill prior contractual obligations," it appears to be holding the line on Savage's forced retirement. As of now, Savage is firmly on the shelf. Unless the Warrior-led campaign continues its push, he's likely to stay there.

"The thing about Warrior's attitude that I find so incredible is that he's placing the welfare of the sport above his own welfare," said the source. "If Savage comes back, Warrior might have to face him again fairly soon, and return matches are never easy. But Warrior knows that it would be best for wrestling to get Savage back in the ring, so he's going out of his way to support the reinstatement."

Indeed, it would behoove wrestling and all its patrons to have Randy Savage back in action. Not only because of his obvious skill, but because he is a potentially good heart for a federation that always needs one. □

INTERVIEW

LARRY ZBYSZKO

FOR YEARS, LARRY Zbyszko has called himself the "Living Legend," but that claim was ignored by most fans. The arrogant Pittsburgh native has long insisted that he was the man who ended the career of Bruno Sammartino, thus earning that designation. But despite Larry's lengthy 1980 feud with the ***real*** *"Living Legend," Zbyszko's hyperbole has little basis in reality—in fact, Sammartino won most of the matches against his former protege.*

On February 7, 1989, however, many fans started to take Zbyszko seriously for the first time. That was the day when the brash contender finally became a world champion by winning a battle royal to capture the vacant AWA title.

For most of the next two years, Zbyszko managed to keep a precarious hold on his precious belt, surviving stern challenges from Nikita Koloff, Sgt. Slaughter, and Tom Zenk. Zbyszko lost the title to Mr. Saito in Tokyo in February 1990, but regained the belt from the Japanese master two months later. After that, Zbyszko rarely scored a pinfall victory; he remained champion through a canny blend of guile and rulebreaking.

Perhaps Zbyszko got complacent. Perhaps he was afraid of dropping the title again. Whatever the reason, Zbyszko refused to embark on an AWA-sanctioned tour of Japan in December 1990. A livid AWA President Joe Blanchard ordered that Zbyszko be stripped of the title on December 12.

Two-time former AWA champion Larry Zbyszko, the self-proclaimed "Living Legend," is mulling over an offer to join Alexandra York's Foundation.

Five days later on television, Zbyszko told Blanchard and AWA legal counsel Robert Ryan to "take the belt and cram it." So much for going out with dignity.

A frustrated Zbyszko considered retiring from the sport in favor of a career in the private business sector, but reconsidered in early-1991. He entered the WCW, and it was apparent that Zbyszko was serious about making a full-scale comeback.

How serious? At press time, Zbyszko was thinking about signing a contract with computer expert Alexandra York to become the newest member of The York Foundation. The rulebreaking aggregation already includes Terry Taylor and huge Mr. Hughes. The addition of Zbyszko could make the Foundation a major force.

Associate Editor Andy Rodriguez ventured to Philadelphia to speak with Zbyszko before the 19-year veteran's bout with Tim Horner at the Civic Center.

Q: Larry, your return to the WCW has inspired a lot of talk among the fans. The question on everybody's mind right now is this: Will you or won't you? Are you going to join The York Foundation?

A: *(pauses)* **Maybe.**

Q: You've been teaming with Terry Taylor—or perhaps I should say *Terrence* Taylor—quite often lately. Has York's computer helped you with your match strategies?

A: Perhaps.

Q: What's the problem here? You agreed to take part in this interview, and now all I'm getting is one-word answers. What's going on?

A: Nothing.

Q: Come on, Larry, we . . .

A: Look, one-word answers are all you deserve, you simp. Wasn't it your family of magazines that buried me when the AWA stripped me of the title? You guys practically sent me off to the old wrestlers' home, didn't you? Well, by now I've shown you all for the idiots you really are. Look at my record since returning to the WCW. I was a champion the last time I was here, you know. I held the Western States title, and did so with a great deal of pride.

Q: You must've been holding it at home. It's true that you won that belt from Barry Windham, but then you spent almost a full year ignoring it. The federation brass finally got fed up and declared that title null and void.

A: Big deal! That means I retired the title as an undefeated champion. And as anyone can see, I've picked up right where I left off. I'm so successful that I have the hottest manager in the WCW, Alexandra York, going crazy trying to sign me to a contract.

Q: So what will it be? Are you going to become a member of her group or not?

A: To be honest with you, my jury is still out, and I'm waiting to hear from the foreman. I like what Alex has done so far. After all, Terrence Taylor is a terrific talent, and I enjoyed having Mr. Hughes around to watch my back. On the other hand, York insists that every move her wrestlers make during their matches is determined by that computer of hers. I'm not so sure I want some laptop telling me what to do all the time.

Q: So you're *not* going to sign?

A: Did I say that? Hey, that babe has offered me a huge contract—six figures! I'd have to be a complete idiot to ignore such an offer. However, I *do* have some other things on my mind these days—namely, getting some gold back around my waist again.

Q: It must be strange not to wear a belt after two years as AWA champion.

A: Like you'd know anything about that, you little spudhead. However, I *am* hungry again. When that buffoon Blanchard decided to strip me of the AWA title, I thought I'd take the millions I earned as champion, invest it, and live out the rest of my life on a boat floating off somewhere in the Pacific. I really thought about bringing my wrestling career to a close, but then I thought, *why now?* I'd hate to go out right after having to give up the AWA belt. Instead, I want to make my two AWA titles a starting point for even bigger glory.

Q: So what championships are you after now? Obviously, you'd want to win the WCW World title that belongs to Ric Flair.

A: Yeah, but Ric's a pretty good friend of mine. It was Flair who decided I should fill in for the injured Arn Anderson during the "War Games" match at Wrestle War '91. I led Flair, Sid Vicious, and Barry Windham to victory over Sting, the Steiners, and that

Although he appreciates the size of the contract York offered him, Zbyszko says he's not sure he likes the idea of taking orders from a computer.

Zbyszko is sunset-flipped by Steve Armstrong. After considering retirement, Zbyszko decided he wanted to achieve greater levels of glory in the ring.

runt Pillman . . .

Q: *You* led the Horsemen to victory? Come on!

A: Opinions vary, pal. Flair proved he was looking out for my best interests by getting me into that main event so quickly after I returned to the WCW. To thank him for that, I won't challenge him—at least for a little while. There are plenty of other targets to shoot for around here. In particular, Lex Luger's U.S. belt looks pretty appetizing. And those U.S. tag team belts are up for grabs, and Terry and I could win them with ease. Any way I want to go, I'm more than ready for the challenge.

In matches against the likes of Greg Gagne, Zbyszko cheated constantly to hang on to the AWA title. But he sees it another way: He calls himself a "rules user," not a rulebreaker.

Q: There are rumors that the AWA is going to start up operations again in a few months. Do you have any desire to try to regain the AWA belt you once held?

A: Are you kidding? Once, I was the AWA champion of the *world,* which meant I traveled all over beating the best competition I could find. But to go back to the AWA and wrestle against nobodies in high school gyms and bars in Minnesota—if I'm *lucky,* that is—wouldn't do my career any good at all. I have bigger and better things in mind. In fact, when I really get to thinking about it, I should've left the AWA long before I did. There's better competition in the WCW, and I've proven my worth to Sting already.

Q: Well, Sting has more than held his own against you. But I must admit you haven't looked this aggressive in years.

A: That's because I realize I've reached the crossroads. Wrestlers have such big egos that many of 'em just won't change when they get a little older. Me, I know what the score is. Hell, the mirror tells me every day. I can see the lines on my face, the flecks of gray in my hair. I'm not as young as I used to be, but that doesn't mean I can't be every bit as competitive—maybe more so—than I was in my younger days. That's why I've turned up the heat several notches. When I challenged Sting, the dumb kid laughed at me—he laughed right in my face! But if you ask Sting what he thinks of my ability now, I'm sure he won't find it such a funny proposition to wrestle me.

Q: I'm sure he doesn't. But you have a long way to go before you can start to be considered a contender for the titles you talked about. You've wrestled Sting, but you haven't *pinned* him. In fact, I can't think of the last time you scored a pinfall victory over *anybody*—even when you were AWA champion.

A: You wait and see what I do to Horner in a few minutes [Zbyszko pinned Horner in 5:42]. And what you fail to realize, Mr. Expert, is that as a champion, you only have to be good enough to keep your title. Your opponent has to beat you, you don't have to beat him. So if I got away from a title match with a countout or losing by disqualification—hey, that was fine with me. I still had my belt. People call me a rulebreaker because of that. That's not true at all. I'm a rules *user*. Those regulations are on the books for a reason, and nobody knows the ins and outs of getting around them better than I do.

Big Van Vader has given Zbyszko a taste of the competition in the WCW.

Q: But where's the pride in that?

A: Don't talk to *me* about pride. The only time I'm proud is when I walk into a bank and the manager jumps out of his chair, rolls out a red carpet, and calls me Mr. Zbyszko. *That's* when I really get proud, chump. And the only thing that produces that kind of cash flow is to hold a major title, and the WCW's full of 'em. I could sign with Ms. York, or I could do it on my own. Either way, it doesn't really matter. But I *will* be a champion by the end of 1991. Now put *that* in your lousy little magazine. □

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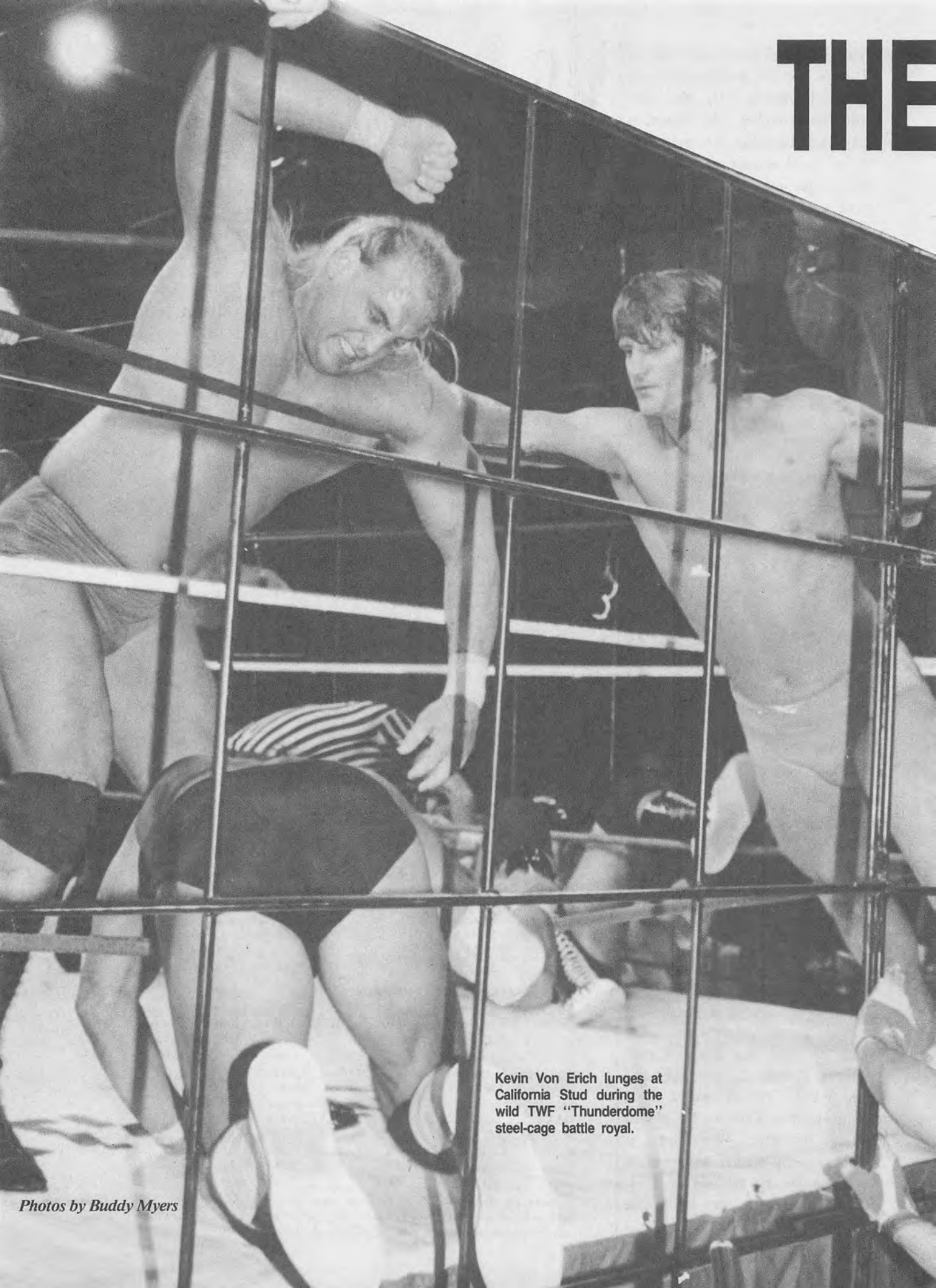


Kevin Von Erich lunges at California Stud during the wild TWF "Thunderdome" steel-cage battle royal.

Photos by Buddy Myers

TRADITION OF TEXAS TOUGHNESS

TWF Keeps It Alive

So you thought old-time Texas brawling was a thing of the past? Think again! The Texas Wrestling Federation is bringing fans in the Lone Star State the most action-packed cards and the wildest bouts they've seen in years!

By Bob Smith

IT WAS OCTOBER 1975 in the hot, smoke-filled Sports Arena in Amarillo, Texas. Eighteen top wrestlers were about to battle it out for $10,000 in a two-ring battle royal, and every man who entered the special match was willing to do anything in his power to come up with a victory.

After 17 minutes of sheer violence in and out of the rings, Bobby Jaggers and Red Bastien were the last two men remaining on the mat. Like animals, the two combatants pushed at each other with what little strength remained in their bodies. Soon, both men fell out of the ring, more from exhaustion than from any offense either grappler could muster.

Amazingly, Jaggers had just enough strength left to slowly inch his way back up to the apron and claim the $10,000 prize. Four men were hospitalized because of various injuries after the final bell had sounded. It looked as if the action was finally about to subside when Killer Brooks and Intern II attacked Jaggers.

"Only in Texas," groaned a nearly unconscious Jaggers in the locker room.

***

March 22, 1991. The Metrodome, Dallas: Eighteen men stared warily at each other from the confines of a "Thunderdome" steel cage. Within a few moments, the scene turned to utter chaos. Abdullah the Butcher attacked Iceman Parsons. Angel of Death grabbed Al Perez, while Sweet Daddy Falcone and Terry Garvin ganged up on Kevin Von Erich. This all occurred before the timekeeper had sounded the opening bell.

After more than 19 minutes of wild action, Perez and Angel were the last two men remaining in the ring. The "Latin Heartthrob" climbed to the top rope to try to escape the cage, but Angel grabbed at Perez' legs from the mat. For a moment, it appeared that Perez was about to be pulled back to the canvas, but a kick to the head sent Angel flying. Perez climbed over the top of the cage to score the hard-fought victory. After the bell sounded, Angel once again attacked Perez, and the enemies brawled all the way back to the dressing room.

"Only in Texas," said a weary Perez after the match.

Gary Hart wouldn't have it any other way. As matchmaker for the new Texas Wrestling Federation, the former manager is attempting to bring an old-time Texas flavor back to the cards that the TWF promotes.

"In other words, *pure action,*" said Hart, who insists he's a changed man after years of rule-breaking. "Texas is the state where the greatest events in wrestling history have taken place. From the days of the Funk brothers right through to the Von Erichs, Texas fans are used to seeing the wildest bouts anywhere.

These people just won't accept anything less."

Perhaps that's why Hart readily admits that the rules in the TWF, which has been in existence for just over a year, are uncommonly relaxed. Not to the point of sheer anarchy, but just enough so the matches have the rugged style that Texas fans appreciate the most.

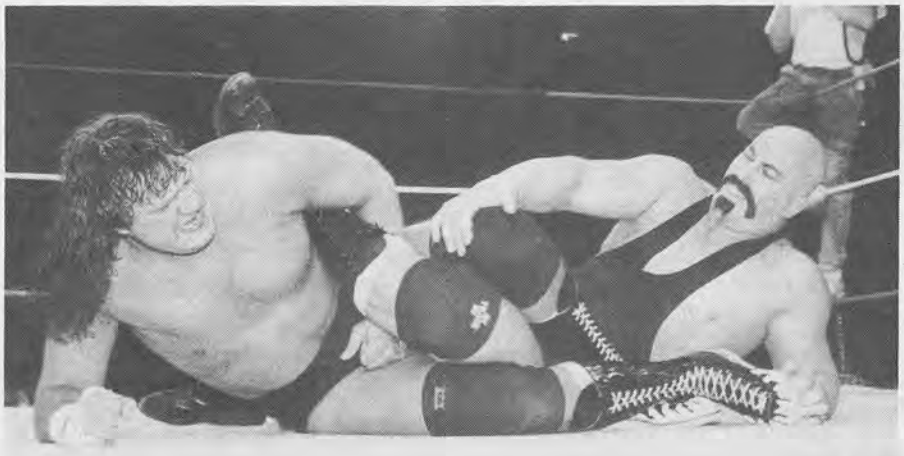
"Okay, so maybe a *little* rule-breaking is still in my blood," Hart chuckled. "But I firmly believe that fans don't want to come to the matches and see a bunch of disqualifications—not in Texas. We bring in the toughest veterans we can find, but we also try to give the young talent a chance. Then we let them all *wrestle*. You won't see guys get suspended for making comments about someone's mother in the TWF!"

Hart seems to have struck a successful formula. The March 22 card at the Metroplex featured 10 matches of raucous no-holds-barred brawling.

Not *every* attempt at savagery was allowed: When Abdullah the Butcher tried to strangle Iceman Parsons with a camera cable, he was disqualified, as was California Stud in his match against Terry Garvin. It was clear, however, that the TWF was trying to feature a rugged style that many fans—and wrestlers—were starting to think was a thing of the past.

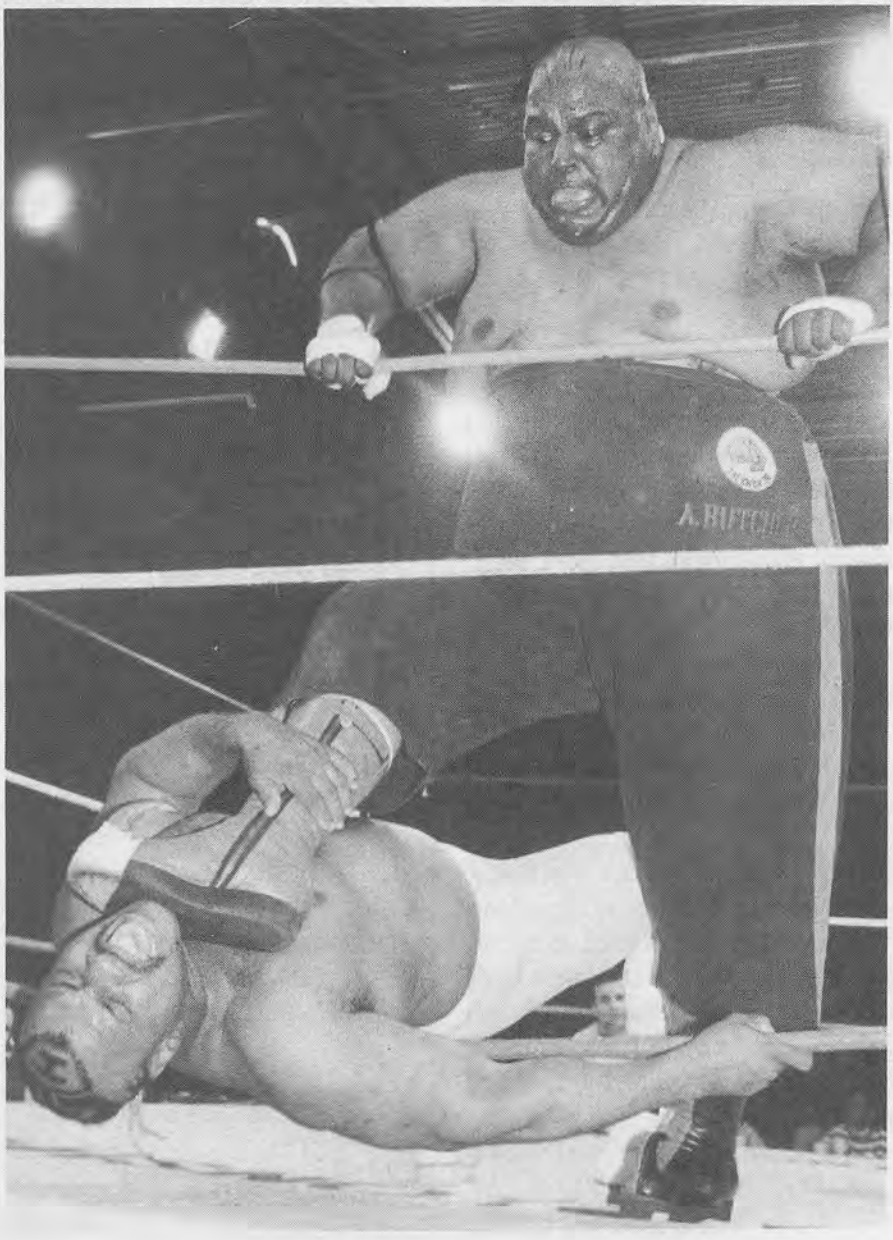
"That's the way it ought to be," said Steve Simpson, who, with his brother Shaun, is making a comeback in the TWF. "I've always played by the rules, and I always will. But when someone challenges me, I need the freedom to be able to fight back. The TWF gives me that freedom. In a way, it reminds me of the glory years of World Class. When that bell rings, anything goes!"

Fans seem enthralled by this unique brand of grappling, but there has already been some controversy. In 1990, Perez was de-



Von Erich and Sweet Daddy Falcone cuff Abdullah (above). Dragon Master and Al Perez tussle outside the ring (below). Terry Gordy leglocks Angel of Death (bottom).

In typical TWF action, Iceman Parsons clocks Abdullah with a chair (above) and Abdullah throttles Iceman with his boot (below). Gary Hart says the rules are looser in this federation.



clared the TWF champion by the organization's championship committee. One member of that board was Hart—Perez' former manager. Fans cried foul, but both parties insist no chicanery took place behind the scenes.

"Gary had almost nothing to do with my becoming champion," said Perez earnestly. "I realize it didn't look on the up-and-up when I was given that belt, but since then I've lost it to Matt Borne and won it back again. Anybody who criticizes my title reigns now is way off the mark."

"I've given Al no special treatment," insisted Hart. "Sure, we're still friends, but Perez has proven his worth in the *ring*. That's what every wrestler in the TWF has to do if he wants to be successful."

Hart is overjoyed that the TWF has been accepted by both fans and wrestlers. But unlike other organizations, the TWF has no plans of expanding.

"The TWF is by Texans and for Texans," insists Hart. "The people of the Lone Star State are a different breed. They like their matches hot 'n' nasty, and the TWF means just that. We're established now in Texas, and this is where we're staying."

Fans in the rest of the country can only look on with envy. □

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MAILBAG

(Continued from page 5)

The Nasty Boys may not be great scientific wrestlers, but reader Harry Mongell says they at least must be commended for winning the WWF World tag team title.

tory at WrestleMania IV, Savage held the title for more than a year.

ALBERT HASKELL
Hawthorne, CA

NASTY-CIZED

I was disappointed in The Hart Foundation for losing the WWF tag belts to The Nasty Boys, but then I thought they must have known that Jimmy Hart would have tried something fishy. The Harts should have brought their own protection to the ring. Maybe one of The Bushwhackers, who weren't wrestling on the card. You better believe the "Mouth of the South" wouldn't have tried anything if Luke Williams or Butch Miller showed up.

Give Brian Knobs and Jerry Sags credit, though; they are the champions. Who would have predicted that even six months ago, when they were being humiliated by the Steiners? Knobs and Sags may be lousy technical wrestlers, but they're on top. For them, it's all that matters.

HARRY MONGELL
Little Rock, AR

(Continued on page 52)

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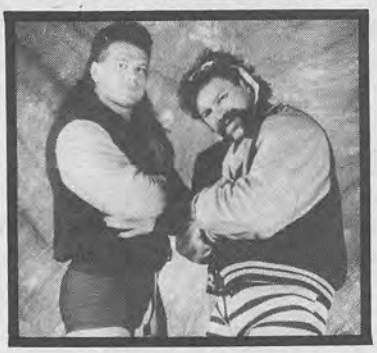
THIS MONTH IN...

Inside Wrestling

HULK HOGAN is burning mad! Beating **SGT. SLAUGHTER** for the WWF World title wasn't enough!



RICK and **SCOTT STEINER** are interviewed on the "Hotseat": "We're not half as good as we're going to be!"

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VIRGIL is on his own—and richer for it . . . Uncovered: The USWA's plot to eliminate **TERRY FUNK** . . . How **THE NASTY BOYS'** win at WrestleMania destroyed **THE HART FOUNDATION** . . . **"DANGEROUS" DAN SPIVEY** comes of age . . . **RIC FLAIR** and **BARRY WINDHAM** square off "One On One"

All this—and much more . . .
in the July 1991 issue of
Inside Wrestling

NOW ON SALE!

The Wrestler

The bittersweet reunion of **RANDY SAVAGE** and **ELIZABETH**

RICK and **SCOTT STEINER** conquer the world!

PLUS . . .

Can **RIC FLAIR** shatter the "myth" of Japanese superiority? . . . **THE LEGION OF DOOM'S** obsession: Dethrone **THE NASTY BOYS**—in 59 seconds! . . . For USWA hellraisers **ERIC EMBRY** and **TOM PRICHARD**, violence is golden! . . . "Q & A" interview with **JOHN TOLOS**

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WINTER 1985

SUMMER 1986

WINTER 1984/Color pinup: Billy Jack Haynes. **Stories include:** Ventura, Adams, Martel, Flair, Reed.

FALL 1985/Color pinup: Steve Keirn & Stan Lane. **Stories include:** Albano & Hogan, DiBiase, Warriors, Garvin.

WINTER 1985/Color pinup: Barry Windham. **Stories include:** Hogan, Zbyszko, Kerry, R&R Express, Steamboat, Thesz.

SPRING 1986/Color pinup: The Road Warriors. **Stories include:** Martel, Savage vs. Poffo, Hogan, Santana, Steamboat.

SUMMER 1986/Color pinup: Rock 'n' Roll Express & Magnum T.A. **Stories include:** Flair, Warriors, JYD, Magnum, Williams.

FALL 1986/Color pinup: Randy Savage. **Stories include:** R&R Express, Missy, Roberts, Windham, Luger, Rhodes.

WINTER 1986/Color pinup: Hulk Hogan. **Stories include:** Flair, Freebirds, Hogan, Andre, Watts, Haynes, Fantastics.

SPRING 1987/Color pinup: The Four Horsemen. **Stories include:** Ventura, T.A., Bulldogs, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.

SUMMER 1987/Color pinup: Road Warriors workout. **Stories include:** Hogan-Andre, Rockers, Koloff, Warriors, Hall-Luger.

FALL 1987/Color pinup: Dark Journey. **Stories include:** Albano, Hogan, T.A., Lane, Hyatt, Hennig, Luger.

WINTER 1987/Color pinup: Jesse Ventura. **Stories include:** Kerry, Rhodes, Hogan, Flair, Honky Tonk, DiBiase.

SPRING 1988/Color pinup: Elizabeth. **Stories include:** Hennig, Koloff, Savage, Strike Force, Warriors, Andre-Hogan.

SUMMER 1988/Color pinup: Missy Hyatt. **Stories include:** Rock 'n' Roll Express, Hogan, Sting, Luger, Owen Hart, Animal.

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SPRING 1989/Color pinup: Rick Steamboat. **Stories include:** Bigelow, Lawler, Blazer, Sting, Ultimate-Hogan, Jake-Andre, Powers of Pain.

SUMMER 1989/Color pinup: Sting & Lex Luger. **Stories include:** Hogan, Von Erich, Sting & Ultimate, Warriors, Nikita, Luger.

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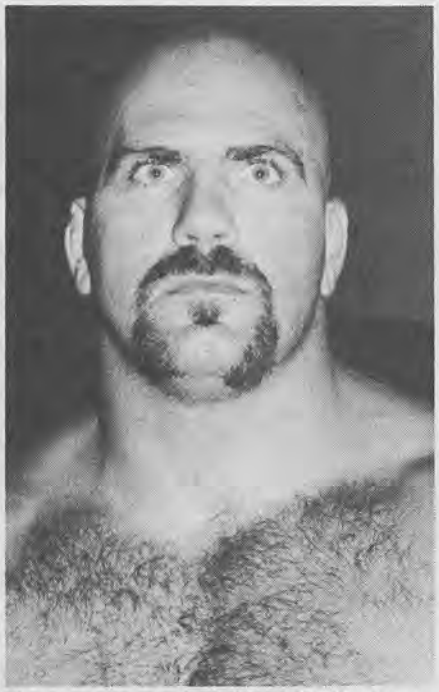
(Continued from page 50)



The meaner, nastier Nikita Koloff who attacked Lex Luger is cheered on by reader Paula Diorio.

NI-KI-TA!

The "Russian Nightmare" is back and Lex Luger is a doomed man!

Nikita Koloff is back for his U.S. title and Luger just happens to be the unlucky man who has the belt around his waist. When Nikita hit an unsuspecting Luger in the face with the belt at Wrestle War, I knew Luger's days were numbered.

If I were Luger, I'd run for my life!

PAULA DIORIO
Staten Island, NY

WELCOME BACK, BRUTUS

It was great to see Brutus "The Barber" Beefcake back in the WWF, even if it is only to host an interview segment. It is a miracle that Beefcake came back the way he did. Hopefully, he will use his interview time to put the many WWF rulebreakers in their place.

I'm still holding out hope that he will wrestle again someday. He is a former World tag team champion, and he can be a world singles titleholder, too.

SHARON CARTER
Ocala, FL

SIMMONS IS BACK

Ron Simmons entered the sport with a lot of promise, but when he became a member of Doom with Butch Reed, that promise went right out the window.

Sure, they became WCW World tag team champions, but at what price? Simmons lost so much of the respect he had earned over his first few years in the sport. Imagine the kids who looked up to him all of a sudden seeing him bust heads at the direction of weasely Teddy Long.

Ron Simmons is fighting well without Teddy Long as his manager, and that pleases reader Mary Lee.

It must have been hard for Simmons to throw away all that success, but he definitely made the right decision. He's beating Reed in just about all the matches they've had so far. He's proving to Long that the manager has made a very big mistake.

I hope Simmons continues on this path.

MARY LEE
Easton, PA

WAR OF THE DUNDEES

The ongoing feud between Bill Dundee and his son, Jamie, has to be one of the saddest things this sport has ever seen. Yes, there have been father-son confrontations before—Blackjack Mul-

(Continued on page 54)

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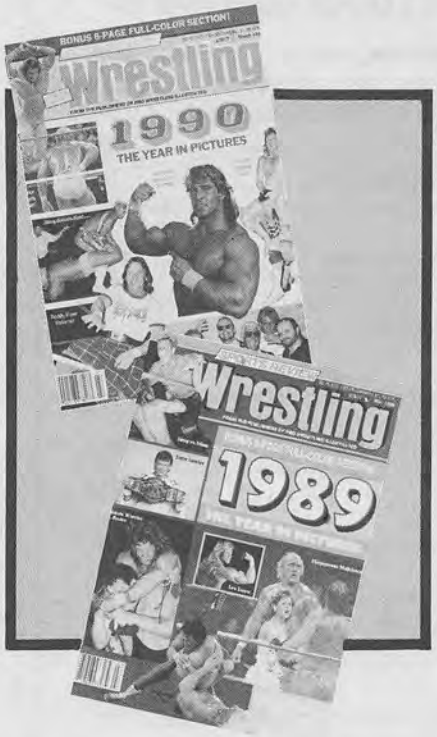

In the March 1990 and March 1991 editions, *Sports Review Wrestling* featured a bonus FULL-COLOR "Year In Pictures" section! All the feuds, title changes, controversies, and dramas of each year are captured in dozens of magnificent peak-action photos as only the staff of *Sports Review Wrestling* can bring them to you! Copies of these collectors' issues are only $5 each. Supplies are limited, so order today!

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MAILBAG

(Continued from page 53)

The split between Jamie and Bill Dundee dismays reader Lon Fowler, who hopes father and son reconcile their differences soon.

ligan and Barry Windham spring to mind—but the Dundee situation seems more tragic because Jamie is just getting started.

Now, instead of having his father guide him through the pitfalls and obstacles, he sees Bill as one of those obstacles. They argue incessantly on television and in the magazines. They clearly don't trust each other. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if they ended up wrestling each other.

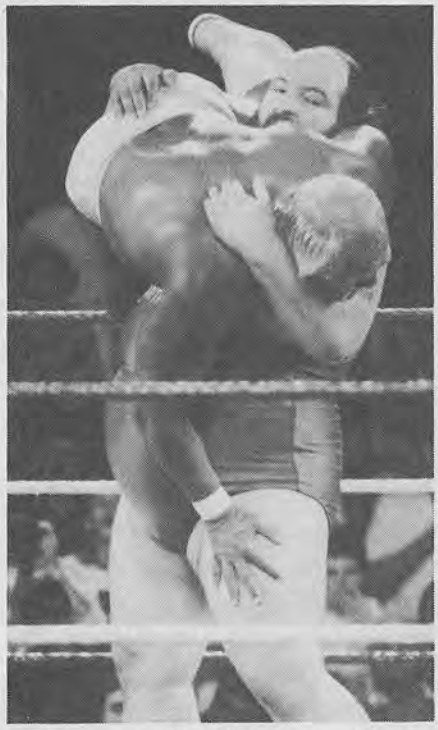
I think the USWA officials should consider banning Bill from ringside when Jamie wrestles, and vice versa. This could be a possible first step toward reconciliation. It would at least be a start.

LON FOWLER
Savannah, GA

EARTHQUAKING

Earthquake sure has the potential to be WWF World champion, but with Hulk Hogan regaining that belt, it looks like a longshot for the big man.

Jimmy Hart is a fine manager, but there's only so much he can do in terms of getting championship matches. Besides, Earthquake and Hogan had so many matches, and Hulk dominated him so thoroughly; I don't think anyone is too anxious to see them wrestle again.



Earthquake can slam Hulk Hogan with ease, but can't pin him. Reader Kirk Lambeau doubts 'Quake will ever win the World title.

Earthquake will continue to receive high-quality opponents, but it will probably be a while before he wears a title belt.

KIRK LAMBEAU
Chicago ☐

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In which sport did Ken Patera win an Olympic medal?
1) Weightlifting 3) Gymnastics
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Who was Hulk Hogan's first WWF manager?
1) Fred Blassie 3) Jimmy Hart
2) Arnold Skaaland 4) Elizabeth

Which man was never a member of Paul Ellering's Legion of Doom?
1) Jake Roberts 3) King Kong Bundy
2) Hawk 4) Buzz Sawyer

For which NFL team did Brian Pillman compete?
1) Kansas City Chiefs 3) Cincinnati Bengals
2) Los Angeles Rams 4) Atlanta Falcons

Gorilla Monsoon was originally billed as being from:
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LOCKER ROOM CONFIDENTIAL

(Continued from page 10)

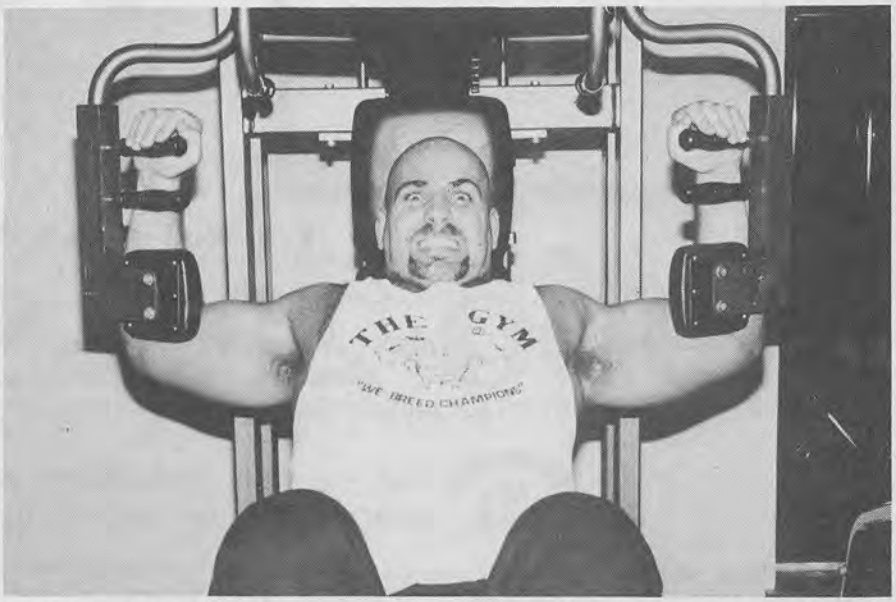
Magnum and Nikita's best-of-seven series for the U.S. title made them bitter enemies, but it also forced them to respect each other.

nament to Magnum, and when Magnum walked to ringside on the second night, it was one of the most touching moments in wrestling history.

Dusty and Nikita won the Crockett Cup. But Magnum never fully recovered and, to this day, remains on the sidelines, dreaming of one day returning to the ring but content that he has already come so far. Happy to be alive.

Then this. We could read each other's minds as we stared at each other: What happened to Nikita's lifelong commitment to Magnum? What happened to this man who had learned the ways of America and embraced our country?

"I do not know what happened, Bill," Magnum answered without even being asked a question. "Obviously, something has gone very wrong. Maybe he got bitter, but I would be the first person to tell you that you can't



Koloff now claims he made a mistake when he befriended Magnum. He says he's not worried about what happened five years ago. That attitude dismays Magnum.

get bitter. You must continue to follow your principles. This is very sad. Maybe I can speak with him."

I left shortly afterward. Magnum said he would be fine, that he would try to reach Nikita by phone. I told Magnum I'd get back to him; I wanted to know the outcome of their phone call.

A few days later, I was back at the office when a phone call came through from Magnum.

"I got through to him, Bill, but I didn't get through to him, if you know what I mean," Magnum said. I knew exactly what he meant.

"He said the past is the past," Magnum continued. "I told him that his commitment was for life. He said that he can't worry about what happened five years ago. He said it was a stupid mistake that almost ruined his life. You know, Bill, that's what hurt the most. Nikita does something for somebody, for me, and he calls it a stupid mistake. I just don't know."

And I didn't know how to console Magnum. I knew he was shaking on the other end of the phone. The last few days must have been horrible for him.

"They're wrestling in Baltimore on April 12," Magnum said. "I'm going to go talk to him in person. Goodbye."

Magnum hung up the phone and, suddenly, a lump formed in my throat. It only took me a second to realize why.

Baltimore is where it all happened. That's where the 1987 Crockett Cup took place and we were all witnesses to that stirring scene with Magnum, Dusty, and Nikita.

What could Magnum expect in Baltimore this time? I didn't want to know.

There are, it seems, some things that just aren't worth knowing. Perhaps Magnum should have stayed home and gone on his with his life, but I knew he'd be in Baltimore.

Life had taken another strange turn for Magnum T.A.. And this one, like so many of the others, had gone the wrong way. □

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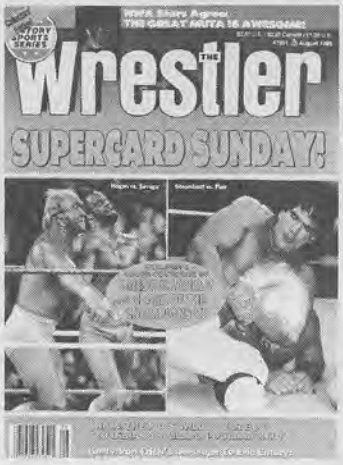

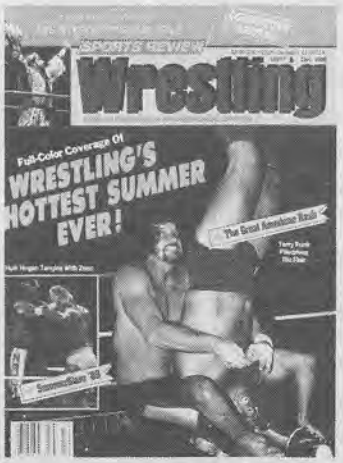

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WE ACCUSE

(Continued from page 16)

Shortly after being "banned" from the WWF, Savage competed in Japan. The official reason is that he was fulfilling prior match obligations.

Then he would have been left with no matches at all.

But once Savage lost, his commitments should have been wiped out. After all, what was to stop Savage (or the Warrior?) from making commitments for the next year or two? Would they have been allowed to fulfill those commitments?

The WWF should have told Savage to wipe out these commitments. A simple announcement or newspaper advertisement could have informed the fans that Savage would not appear on any more cards. The fans would have understood.

What the fans couldn't understand is how Savage was allowed to wrestle matches after losing to the Warrior. It made no sense. It made the WrestleMania match seem meaningless.

It made the WWF leaders seem weak. It made them seem like money-grubbers. They were going to milk Savage for all they could, and never mind the retirement match. Never mind justice. Never mind playing by the rules.

What's next? If Savage decides to come back wearing a mask (a common route taken by banned wrestlers), will they turn their backs on that, too? Will we have another Andre the Giant (Machine) situation? Will the WWF again laugh in the face of justice?

And will it be laughed at in return?

Sometimes rules are taken too lightly, but rules are the base on which any sport is built. Take the rules too lightly and the sport ceases to exist.

The time has come for the WWF to understand this. Far too often, WWF rules come under wide interpretation.

Isn't WWF President Jack Tunney capable of maintaining consistency? If not, he should be replaced by a person with a clearer mind.

We were saddened by the announcement of the retirement match at WrestleMania. We were saddened when Savage lost, just as we would have been saddened if the Warrior lost.

But an alarm went off in our heads when Elizabeth ran to Savage's side at the end of the match. The alarm said: "This isn't over yet. Savage isn't gone. He'll come back. Somehow."

We didn't know he'd be back within the week with the WWF's blessing.

There is no happy ending to this story. Perhaps the time has come to ban retirement matches, but that's a subject for another column.

Until then, the time has certainly come for the federations to play by the rules. The WWF must show it has a stronger hand than it has shown so far. □

This match against Rick Martel took place in Las Vegas two days after WrestleMania. If Savage comes back wearing a mask, will he be allowed to wrestle? Probably.

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March 1982/Valentine, Brisco-Funk, Steele, Flair, Hayes.
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July 1982/Steamboat-Idol, Albano, Rhodes, Patera.
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November 1982/Piper, Abdullah, Saito, Von Erich, Mascaras.
December 1982/Backlund-Rose, Rhodes-Flair, Albano, Humperdink.
January 1983/Rich, McDaniel-Valentine, Patera, Brisco, Bockwinkel.
February 1983/Flair-Race, Morales-Rose, Patera, Bravo, Spoiler.
March 1983/Flair-Bass, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat, Patera.
April 1983/Backlund-Graham, Briscos, Rhodes, Hogan, Samoans.
May 1983/Muraco, Dillon, Sullivan, Reed, Brisco, Von Erich.
June 1983/Piper, Bockwinkel-Patterson, Brody, Sullivan, Baba.
July 1983/Valiant-Humperdink, Martel, Hernandez, Murdoch, Armstrong.
October 1983/Martel-Valentine, Mulligan, Lawler, Von Erichs, Bruno.
November 1983/Andre-Mulligan, Kamala-Brody, Slater, Backlund.
December 1983/Windham-LeDuc, Santana, Sullivan, Garvin.
January 1984/Andre-Abdullah, Bockwinkel, Gilbert, Windham, Flair, Mosca.
February 1984/Rich-Sawyer, Idol-Hansen, Martel, Parsons, Von Erich.
April 1984/Von Erich-Gordy, Dillon & Nagasaki, Graham, DiBiase, Orndorff.
May 1984/LeDuc-Sawyer, Assassins, The Men Who Make Wrestling Fly!
June 1984/Windham-Flair, Gilbert, Sawyer, Bockwinkel, Tsuruta.
July 1984/Flair-Gordy, Duggan, Blanchard, Brisco, AWA tag tourny.
August 1984/Rich & Gilbert, Adams-Hayes, Von Erich, Faces Of Wrestling.
September 1984/Flair-Steamboat, Freebirds-Von Erichs—Special coverage of two big cards.
October 1984/Sullivan-Rhodes, Freebirds video, Atlas, Orange Bowl card.
November 1984/Von Erich & Billy Jack, Andre, Fab Ones, Summer Wars!
December 1984/Rich-Gilbert, Martel, Mascaras, Youngblood, World Class.
January 1985/Flair-McDaniel, Missing Link, Backlund, Fabulous Ones, *Pro Wrestling USA*, Valentine.
February 1985/Sullivan-Graham, Hernandez & Nicola Roberts, Bruno Jr., Steamboat, Warriors.
March 1985/Starrcade '84 featuring Flair, Rhodes, Steamboat, Koloffs, 1985 Datebook, Hayes, wrestling school.
April 1985/Von Erich-Blackwell, Haynes-Barr, Hart, Irwins, 1984 in Pictures, Blair.
May 1985/Albano, Freebirds-Flair, Steamboat, Hernandez, Las Vegas.
June 1985/Pro Wrestling U.S.A, Von Erich, Richter, Windham, Taylor.
July 1985/Von Erich, WrestleMania, bloodiest matches, Backlund, Snuka.
August 1985/Flair-Nikita, Orndorff, Slaughter, Parade of Champions II.
September 1985/Adams-Von Erich, Orndorff, Sawyer, Kamala, Barr.
October 1985/Martel-Hayes, Richter, Savage, Adams, T.A., Warriors.
November 1985/Freebirds-Warriors, Mid-South, Haynes, Rhodes, Savage.
December 1985/Hogan, Zbyszko-Martel, Murdoch, Dillon, fiendish faces.
January 1986/Savage-Santana, Abdullah, Humongous, Von Raschke, Comiskey Park, Taylor.
February 1986/Junkyard Dog, Rude, Patrick, Garvin, Reed, Datebook.
April 1986/Savage-Hogan, Martel-Hansen, 1985 in Pictures, Warriors, DiBiase.
May 1986/Sammartino, R&R Express, Sunshine-Hyatt, Slater, Devastating Holds, Hall & Hennig.
June 1986/Hogan-Muraco, Midnight Express, Freebirds, Battle of Belts II.
July 1986/Orndorff-Piper, Blanchard-T.A., Matches of '80s, Sheepherders, Bockwinkel, Bulldogs.
August 1986/Crockett Cup Tourny, Jake Roberts, Midnight Rockers, Von Erichs, Wrestling II.
September 1986/Bulldogs, Blanchard-Gibson, Lugar, Dundee, UWF tourny.
October 1986/Orndorff, Rude-Brody, Bash, Bockwinkel, Gordy, Adams.
November 1986/Andersons-R&R Express, Machine, Gordy, Managers.
December 1986/Machines, Fantastics, Warriors, WWF Muchnick Tourny.
January 1987/Russians, Hyatt-Dark Journey, WWF Top 50, Fab Ones.
February 1987/Road Warriors,Savage, Windham & Lugar, 1987 Datebook.
March 1987/Kamala-Hogan, Starrcade 86, Atlas, Williams, Tatum.
April 1987/1986 In Pictures, Kevin Von, Flair, Rich, Hennig-Bockwinkel.
May 1987/Nikita-Flair, Bulldogs, Albano's career, Snuka-DeBeers, Taylor.
June 1987/Hogan-Andre, Hall, Parsons, Garvin, WWF title history.
July 1987/Midnight Express, Savage-Steamboat, Adams, NWA in Boston.
August 1987/Nord-Kevin, Armstrong-Flair, Hogan & Patera, Crockett Cup.
September 1987/Hogan, Akbar, Luger-Nikita, Summer Feuds, charity shows.
October 1987/Windham, Bigelow, Bockwinkel, Western States tourny.
November 1987/Bash, Honky Tonk, Hart, Sheepherders, Condrey.
December 1987/Grappling Ghouls, Hogan-Andre, Luger-Nikita, Boesch card
January 1988/Honky Tonk, Garvin, T.A. career, Arcidi, Hogan.
February 1988/Rhodes, Strike Force, Rich-Adonis, Hyatt, 1988 datebook.
March 1988/Starrcade, Survivor Series, Simpson, Hennig, Zbyszko.
April 1988/1987 In Pictures, Tully & Arn, DiBiase, Kerry, Orton.
May 1988/Hawk-Flair, Andre-Hogan, Dangerously, Duggan, Mike George.
June 1988/Luger-Tully, DiBiase, Adams, NWA New York invasion.
July 1988/Savage wins WWF tourney, Rockers-Express, Hayes, Dusty-Rider.
August 1988/Luger and Sting win Crockett Cup, Savage-DiBiase, Nasty Boys, Ultimate Warrior.
September 1988/Predictions Through 1998, Williams, Rhodes, Bad Company, greatest Garden matches.
October 1988/Midnight Rockers, Sting, Taylor, Koloff, Hot Young Lions.
November 1988/R&R Express, Honky Tonk, Von Erichs, Great American Bash.
December 1988/Warriors, Samoan SWAT Team, Hart, Andre, Presidential Wrestlers.
January 1989/Jake-Cheryl-Rude, Sting, Lawler, Flair, Savage's career.
February 1989/The Champions in '89, Duggan, Roberts, 1989 datebook
April 1989/Starrcade '88, Savage-Hogan, Funk-Mulligan, Heenan, Abdullah.
May 1989/Royal Rumble, WrestleMania, Rhodes, Lawler, Horsemen.
June 1989/Chi-Town Rumble, Hogan-Towers, R&R Express, Rougeaus.
July 1989/WrestleMania V, Sting, Steamboat, Martel vs. Rude, Embry.
August 1989/Luger & Sting, Ultimate, Flair's personal photos, Bulldogs.
September 1989/Duggan, Wrestle War, Rhodes, Flair-Steamboat, Japan.
October 1989/Great American Bash, Piper-Ventura, Savage-Hogan.
November 1989/Hogan's toughest matches, Snuka, Sting, Skyscrapers.
January 1990/Savage, Woman-Steiner, Vicious, fattest wrestlers.
February 1990/Piper, Kerry, Muta & Luger vs. Flair, Datebook.
April 1990/Starrcade '89, Roberts, Williams, Diamond, Five to watch.
May 1990/Hogan, Royal Rumble, Piper, Zbyszko-Sammartino, Nord.
June 1990/Hogan vs. Warrior, Wrestle War '90, Saito, Andre, Paul E.
July 1990/WrestleMania VI, Cornette, Sullivan vs. Norman, Ole.
August 1990/Ultimate Warrior, Blanchard, Windham, NWA returns to NY.
September 1990/Legion of Doom, Luger, Haynes, Gossett, wrestling's far side.
October 1990/Sting, Legion of Doom, Steiners, Kerry, Slaughter.
November 1990/Ultimate Warrior, Great American Bash, Sting, Muta.
December 1990/SummerSlam, Kerry, Steiners, Hart Foundation, Hogan.
January 1991/Sting vs. Luger, Tugboat-Hogan, Bossman, Autumn Armageddon.
February 1991/Halloween Havoc, Rude, Davey Boy, Juicer, Lawler.
April 1991/Bret Hart, Hennig, Gigante, Starrcade '90, Honky Tonk.
May 1991/Hulk Hogan, Sting, Warrior, Royal Rumble, Luger, Williams.
June 1991/Undertaker, Sting & Luger, Dundee, Wrestle War '91, Davey Boy.

SPORTS REVIEW WRESTLING

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INQUIRING REPORTER

(Continued from page 12)

Miko Mikami, Tokyo: "Super World Sports, the organization that co-promotes with the WWF, was founded not long ago, so it is not well-established like All-Japan and New Japan are. That must be taken into account when one looks at the two major cards. WCW wrestlers were able to compete against better Japanese wrestlers than the WWF people were. Perhaps in a few years, a fairer comparison could be made."

Shiro Nagoto, Kobe: "The Americans who competed gave a very good account of themselves. I had never seen Randy Savage wrestle. He lost to [Genichiro] Tenryu, but he could easily have won with the skill he demonstrated. Perhaps having Elizabeth back in his corner will help him to another world title. I still prefer the Japanese style of wrestling, but I enjoy all types. When the WWF returns, I will be there."

Akira Kimura, Tokyo: "There should be more cooperation and less confrontation between the Japanese and American federations. This will benefit fans on both sides of the Pacific. I have seen the WWF and WCW here, and they are both excellent. Their wrestlers learn and improve because of their experiences in Japan, and I imagine the same happens when Japanese grapplers go to America. This is how it should be, wouldn't you agree?"

Megumi Onita, Tokyo: "There is no question that the Japanese are superior on all counts! I saw both major cards, and both times Japanese clearly dominated. Ric Flair is your so-called legend, but he was cleanly pinned by Tatsumi Fujinami. The WCW can say

One fan who enjoyed watching Randy Savage wrestle said he thought Savage had an excellent shot at regaining the WWF World title now that Elizabeth has returned.

Genichiro Tenryu competed at WrestleMania VII as well as on the joint WWF/SWS card.

what they want, but Tatsumi won! Americans wrestle here as independents all the time, and it should remain that way! Let them try to compete on our terms. We don't want their rules!"

Toshi Kikuchi, Nagaoka: "After I attended the WCW/New Japan event in Tokyo with several friends, we began to argue about the American wrestling.

On the big WCW/New Japan card, The Great Muta and Sting resumed the feud that began two years ago.

Some of us insisted the Americans were even more impressive than we thought they would be, while others were not impressed at all. This debate intensified when we saw the WWF stars several days later. We may argue, but we are at least having the opportunity to see all these different wrestlers."

Koichi Mikamura, Tokyo: "I felt very fortunate to have seen both major American federations here over such a short period of time. It was a treat I will not easily forget. As the WCW/New Japan card was still fresh in my mind as I viewed the WWF/SWS event, I was able to compare them more easily. For pure wrestling, I liked the first card better. There are great athletes in the WWF, too, but more in the WCW. The difference, however, is not that great." □

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(Continued from page 6)

cheated to steal the belt from me in 1987, so I took the belt from him and crushed it. Next, I will crush *him*—if I get half a chance!"

"We have to do something," admitted Smith. "The level of violence in the Luger-Koloff encounters has reached terrible proportions. The only way to get it over with is to make sure this conflict reaches a decisive conclusion. Believe me, we must make sure it happens in the near future."

—Alison Corey

ard and Embry as much as I do, but rules are rules."

Mayes disagreed with Marlin's decision to ignore the results of the March 29 Sportatorium card.

"I was at that event, and I was shocked by what I saw," he said angrily. "Prichard used a chain in his match against Jeff Jarrett, and Tojo Yamamoto handed Embry a towel soaked in ether during his cage match against Bill Dundee. If Marlin and the Memphis officials want to allow that kind of wanton lawless-

ERIC EMBRY & TOM PRICHARD

DALLAS, TX: The title situation in the USWA is getting increasingly confusing. USWA official Elliot Mayes held up Eric Embry's Texas title and Tom Prichard's Southern title following the March 29 card at the Sportatorium here, but officials in the USWA's Tennessee region refused to accept those sanctions.

"Only [USWA President] Max Andrews can hold up a title," said USWA Memphis matchmaker Eddie Marlin. "I'm sure Mayes was quite justified in holding up those belts in Texas, but his decisions don't hold here. As far as we're concerned, Embry and Prichard are both still champions. Hey, nobody despises Prichness in Tennessee, that's fine. But I'm sticking with my decisions, and the titles are held up here."

Adding more confusion to the situation was Jarrett's victory over Prichard to win the Southern title on April 8 in Memphis, and Dundee's victory over Embry for the Texas title on April 5 in Dallas. At press time, it was not known if Jarrett's victory will be allowed to stand in Texas. The Dundee victory, meanwhile, creates a split-title situation: Texas recognizes Dundee as Texas champion, while Tennessee recognizes Embry. Andrews was out of the country and could not be reached for comment.

—Andrew Ray

PRETTY YOUNG THINGS

LAWRENCEVILLE, GA: Much to the dismay of local fans, the massive Pretty Young Things—James and Frederick—defeated The Blazers to win a tournament final and capture the vacant Georgia All-Star title here. The title had been unfilled since early-January following a disputed match between previous champions Festus and Jimmy Powell and Mr. Wrestling and Billy Black.

"This victory proves I was right about my he-men," said the PYTs' manager, young Tim Dix. "My boys have the bodies of the '90s, and now they have earned one of the fastest-rising titles in this sport. I'm so proud I could bust."

Despite Dix' claims, James and Frederick are one of the most slovenly teams in the sport, weighing in at a combined 667 pounds (200 pounds more than The Blazers—R.D. Swain and Sugar Ray Lloyd).

"We can beat those guys," said the athletically gifted Lloyd. "They're powerful, but they're slow and get winded easily. If we can keep Dix out of the way, those belts are gonna belong to The Blazers real soon."

—B.W. Foreman □

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A brutal night of devilish destruction! Ric Flair wants to permanately settle the score against Terry Funk. Together with Flair's powerhouse partner, Sting, the two great heavyweight pros treat Funk & The Great Muta to some monstrous portions of punishment! Also: Lex Luger, Thr Road Warriors, The Samoan Swat Team, The Skyscrapers, The Freebirds and many more!

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In a terrorizing bout, Sting defends his title against Sid Vicious. Ric Flair teams up with Arn Anderson to attemp to dethrone Doom for the World Tag Team title. Lex Luger & Stan Hansen pound each other for the U.S. Championship title. In a destructive match for the U.S. Tag Team title: Steiner Brothers vs. Nasty Boys!

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SPORTS REVIEW

Wrestling

TOP 10

1 HULK HOGAN
292, Venice Beach, CA
(5) WWF World champion

2 RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN
(1) WCW World champion

3 LEX LUGER
290, Chicago, IL
(2) WCW U.S. champion

4 TATSUMI FUJINAMI
231, Tokyo, Japan
(-) No. 2 contender: WCW title

5 STING
260, Venice Beach, CA
(4) No. 3 contender: WCW title

6 CURT HENNIG
235, Minneapolis, MN
(6) WWF Intercontinental champion

7 THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR
280, Queens, NY
(9) No. 2 contender: WWF title

8 NIKITA KOLOFF
275, Moscow, Russia
(-) No. 1 contender: U.S. title

9 JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN
(-) USWA champion

10 BIG BOSSMAN
310, Cobb County, GA
(-) No. 1 contender: I-C title

The Legion of Doom

TAG TEAMS

1 RICK & SCOTT STEINER
Combined weight: 483 pounds
(2) WCW World tag team champions

2 THE NASTY BOYS
Combined weight: 565 pounds
(4) WWF World tag team champions

3 THE LEGION OF DOOM
Combined weight: 567 pounds
(5) No. 1 contenders: WWF tag team title

4 BARRY WINDHAM & ARN ANDERSON
Combined weight: 512 pounds
(-) No. 1 contenders: WCW tag team title

5 THE FREEBIRDS
Combined weight: 490 pounds
(3) No. 1 contenders: U.S. tag team title

6 THE YOUNG PISTOLS
Combined weight: 451 pounds
(9) No. 2 contenders: U.S. tag team title

7 THE TEXAS HANGMEN
Combined weight: 531 pounds
(-) USWA tag team champions

8 THE HART FOUNDATION
Combined weight: 515 pounds
(1) No. 2 contenders: WWF tag team title

9 EDDIE GILBERT & JEFF JARRETT
Combined weight: 422 pounds
(-) No. 1 contenders: USWA tag team title

10 STEVE SAWYER & MIKE WINNER
Combined weight: 460 pounds
(-) No. 1 contenders: PNW tag team title

WCW

World Champion:
RIC FLAIR
(C) 243, Minneapolis, MN

1—LEX LUGER
(1) 290, Chicago, IL

2—TATSUMI FUJINAMI
(-) 231, Tokyo, Japan

3—STING
(2) 260, Venice Beach, CA

4—NIKITA KOLOFF
(-) 275, Moscow, Russia

5—EL GIGANTE
(3) 435, Argentina

6—SID VICIOUS
(5) 318, West Memphis, AR

7—BOBBY EATON
(8) 233, Huntsville, AL

8—TERRY TAYLOR
(4) 225, Vero Beach, FL

9—BIG VAN VADER
(-) 375, Denver, CO

10—RON SIMMONS
(9) 260, Perry, GA

WWF

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN
(2) 292, Venice Beach, CA

1—CURT HENNIG
(1) 235, Minneapolis, MN

2—THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR
(4) 280, Queens, NY

3—BIG BOSSMAN
(-) 310, Cobb County, GA

4—SGT. SLAUGHTER
(C) 310, Parris Island, SC

5—THE UNDERTAKER
(5) 320, Dallas, TX

6—DAVEY BOY SMITH
(-) 245, Leeds, England

7—KERRY VON ERICH
(6) 260, Denton, TX

8—JAKE ROBERTS
(8) 246, Stone Mtn., GA

9—RANDY SAVAGE
(-) 245, Sarasota, FL

10—YOSHIAKI YATSU
(-) 260, Gunma, Japan

USWA

USWA Champion:
JERRY LAWLER
(2) 234, Memphis, TN

1—JEFF JARRETT
(4) 200, Hendersonville, TN

2—BILL DUNDEE
(8) 214, Melbourne, Aus.

3—TOM PRICHARD
(9) 220, Houston, TX

4—ERIC EMBRY
(1) 240, Lexington, KY

5—STEVE AUSTIN
(3) 241, Dallas, TX

6—EDDIE GILBERT
(5) 222, Lexington, TN

7—DAN DAVIS
(7) 218, Nashville, TN

8—EL GRANDE PISTOLERO
(-) 225, Mexico

9—GARY YOUNG
(-) 240, Houston, TX

10—BILLY TRAVIS
(-) 218, Houston, TX

PNW

PNW Champion:
STEVE DOLL
(C) 237, Dallas, TX

1—RIP OLIVER
(-) 245, Tampa, FL

2—SCOTT NORTON
(1) 360, Minneapolis, MN

3—JIMMY JACK FUNK
(-) 243, Portland, OR

4—LARRY OLIVER
(7) 260, Tampa, FL

5—AL MADRIL
(9) 231, Los Angeles, CA

6—DOUG MASTERS
(5) 230, Tulsa, OK

7—STEVE SAWYER
(2) 222, Kansas City, MO

8—C.W. BERGSTROM
(3) 250, Portland, OR

9—MIKE WINNER
(4) 238, Virginia City, VA

10—THE EQUALIZER
(8) 250, parts unknown

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue, while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

For period ended April 12, 1991

MOST POPULAR

1. **HULK HOGAN**
   292, Venice Beach, CA
   Last issue: No. 1 Most Popular
2. **LEX LUGER**
   290, Chicago, IL
   Last issue: No. 3 Most Popular
3. **THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR**
   280, Queens, NY
   Last issue: No. 4 Most Popular
4. **STING**
   260, Venice Beach, CA
   Last issue: No. 2 Most Popular
5. **SCOTT STEINER**
   235, Bay City, MI
   Last issue: No. 8 Most Popular
6. **RANDY SAVAGE**
   245, Sarasota, FL
   Last issue: unrated
7. **EL GIGANTE**
   435, Argentina
   Last issue: No. 7 Most Popular
8. **RICK STEINER**
   248, Detroit, MI
   Last issue: No. 10 Most Popular
9. **JERRY LAWLER**
   234, Memphis, TN
   Last issue: No. 6 Most Popular
10. **KERRY VON ERICH**
    260, Denton, TX
    Last issue: unrated

MOST HATED

1. **RIC FLAIR**
   243, Minneapolis, MN
   Last issue: No. 3 Most Hated
2. **SGT. SLAUGHTER**
   310, Parris Island, SC
   Last issue: No. 1 Most Hated
3. **THE UNDERTAKER**
   320, Dallas, TX
   Last issue: No. 4 Most Hated
4. **SID VICIOUS**
   318, West Memphis, AR
   Last issue: No. 2 Most Hated
5. **BARRY WINDHAM**
   263, Sweetwater, TX
   Last issue: No. 8 Most Hated
6. **ARN ANDERSON**
   249, Minneapolis, MN
   Last issue: No. 5 Most Hated
7. **CURT HENNIG**
   235, Minneapolis, MN
   Last issue: No. 6 Most Hated
8. **ERIC EMBRY**
   240, Lexington, KY
   Last issue: No. 9 Most Hated
9. **NIKITA KOLOFF**
   275, Moscow, Russia
   Last issue: unrated
10. **CACTUS JACK**
    277, Truth Or Consequences, NM
    Last issue: unrated

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of those issues—in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only—and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a number-one rating, nine for a number-two ranking, and so on down to one point for a number-10 rating. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, allowing a maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1—STING ..... 78 points
2—ULTIMATE WARRIOR ..... 74 points
3—LEX LUGER ..... 73 points
4—RIC FLAIR ..... 58 points
4—CURT HENNIG ..... 58 points

TAG TEAMS

1—RICK & SCOTT STEINER ..... 79 points
1—THE HART FOUNDATION ..... 79 points
3—DOOM ..... 78 points
4—NASTY BOYS ..... 35 points
5—LOD/DEMOLITION ..... 34 points

UWF

UWF TV Champion:
NONE
To be determined

1. **BRIAN BLAIR**
   (3) 235, Tampa, FL
2. **BAM BAM BIGELOW**
   (-) 368, Mt. Laurel, NJ
3. **PAUL ORNDORFF**
   (1) 253, Brandon, FL
4. **BOB ORTON**
   (5) 245, Kansas City, KS
5. **STEVE WILLIAMS**
   (2) 265, Norman, OK
6. **CACTUS JACK**
   (4) 277, Truth or Cons., NM
7. **COL. DeBEERS**
   (-) 248, South Africa
8. **BORIS ZUKHOV**
   (-) 254, Russia
9. **CPL. KIRCHNER**
   (-) 260, Ft. Bragg, NC
10. **SUNNY BEACH**
    (8) 240, Venice, CA

IWCCW

IWCCW Champion:
NONE
To be determined

1. **VIC STEAMBOAT**
   (1) 235, Honolulu, HI
2. **KEVIN VON ERICH**
   (2) 235, Denton, TX
3. **TONY ATLAS**
   (3) 247, Roanoke, VA
4. **TASMANIAC**
   (4) 245, Tasmania
5. **BIG SWEET WILLIAMS**
   (6) 310, Hollywood, CA
6. **JOE SAVOLDI**
   (7) 220, Parsippany, NJ
7. **CURLY MOE**
   (8) 555, Mudville, OH
8. **SCOTT PUTSKI**
   (-) 235, Austin, TX
9. **HAWAIIAN HURRICANE**
   (10) 270, Honolulu, HI
10. **CHIEF THUNDER MTN.**
    (9) 450, White River, SD

AWA: **AWA champion**—title vacant; **1**—Tommy Jammer; **2**—The Trooper; **3**—Steve O; **4**—Col. DeBeers; **5**—Larry Cameron; **6**—Mike Enos; **7**—Brad Rheingans; **8**—Buck Zumhofe; **9**—Wayne Bloom; **10**—Jake Milliman.

GEORGIA: **Georgia All-Star champion**—Steve Lawler; **1**—Joel Deaton; **2**—Nick Busick; **3**—Billy Black; **4**—Norman; **5**—Festus; **6**—Fabian; **7**—Chris Walker; **8**—PYT Fredrick; **9**—PYT James; **10**—Mike Cervich.

IWA: **IWA champion**—Manny Fernandez; **1**—Preston Steele; **2**—Larry Cameron; **3**—Ivan Koloff; **4**—Jules Strongbow; **5**—Kevin Von Erich; **6**—Honky Tonk Man; **7**—Derrick Dukes; **8**—Thunderfoot; **9**—Bob Orton; **10**—Abdullah the Butcher.

LPWA: **LPWA champion**—Lady X; **1**—Reggie Bennett; **2**—Susan Sexton; **3**—Terri Power; **4**—Bambi; **5**—Magnificent Mimi; **6**—Heidi Lee Morgan; **7**—Madusa Miceli; **8**—Misty Blue Simmes; **9**—Malia Hosaka; **10**—Comrade Orga.

PWA: **PWA champion**—Terminator Riggs; **1**—Ricky Rice; **2**—Charlie Norris; **3**—Tommy Jammer; **4**—Derrick Dukes; **5**—Tommy Ferrara; **6**—Lightning Kid; **7**—Jim Brunzell; **8**—Randy Gust; **9**—Jerry Lynn; **10**—Steve O.

SAPW: **SAPW champion**—Vince Torelli; **1**—Chris Chavis; **2**—Paul Jones; **3**—Tommy Seabolt; **4**—Curtis Thompson; **5**—Sam Houston; **6**—Ivan Koloff; **7**—Ranger Ross; **8**—Ron Garvin; **9**—Wahoo McDaniel; **10**—Jackie Fulton.

TRI-STATE: **Tri-State champion**—D.C. Drake; **1**—J.T. Smith; **2**—Larry Winters; **3**—Tony Stetson; **4**—Rockin' Rebel; **5**—Johnny Hot Body; **6**—C.N. Redd; **7**—Mr. Sandman; **8**—Jimmy Jannetty; **9**—Cry Baby Waldo; **10**—Michael Bruno.

WWC: **WWC champion**—Carlos Colon; **1**—Dick Murdoch; **2**—Ricky Santana; **3**—TNT; **4**—Kim Duk; **5**—Invader I; **6**—Scott Hall; **7**—Doug Gilbert; **8**—Eddie Gilbert; **9**—Action Jackson; **10**—Rick Valentine.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 20 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

Welcome, Tri-State! There's a new organization in our agate ratings section. Beginning this issue, we welcome the Tri-State Wrestling Alliance to our ratings page. This two-year-old federation, which promotes cards in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, features homegrown talent as well as imported stars such as **Jerry Lawler**, **Al Perez**, **The Sheik**, and **Terry Funk**. The current Tri-State champion is vicious **D.C. Drake**. Tri-State replaces the PWF, which has become promotionally inactive in recent months.

Al Perez

The great "Nature Boy" debate. Our May 1991 "Ratings Analysis" brought a veritable flood of reader response. That column's topic—the moderately low rating accorded then-WWF World champion **Sgt. Slaughter** and the high one for WCW World titleholder **Ric Flair**—inspired passionate comments from many readers who believe that Flair should have been rated as low as Slaughter was.

You discussed the way champions achieve victory as an important factor in compiling your ratings, wrote John Peterson on Middletown, New York. *This seems to be true—**except** in Ric Flair's case. You penalized **Larry Zbyszko** with a low rating during his reign as AWA champion, and now you've done the same to Slaughter. But you still hype Flair!*

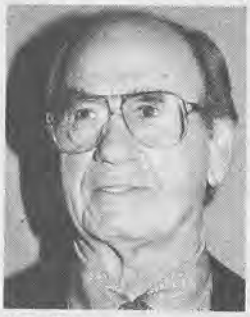
*The only recent World title that Flair has won on his own was when he defeated **Rick Steamboat** [May 7, 1989] for his sixth title. Everything else he has done has been the result of cheating. You even did an article recently about the protection money he paid **The Four Horsemen** to be his "bodyguards." Many of his pins—such as when Flair defeated **Sting** to win his seventh title—are acquired by using the ropes for leverage. When he gets in trouble, he sometimes smacks the referee. And his masquerading as **The Black Scorpion** really shows his true character. You can go on and on.*

*Yet, you are always defending Flair and describing what a great wrestler and champion he is. **Hulk Hogan** uses none of the above tactics. None of Hogan's title reigns have been marked by cheating, while practically all of Flair's have been.*

*How can you compare Flair to past champions such as **Verne Gagne**, **Lou Thesz**, and **Bruno Sammartino**? None of these men were cheats. The double standard you show toward Flair is very obvious—and the way the WCW protects Flair is very obvious to true fans.*

Not all of the response was so highly critical of our ratings. Phil Bolling of Burlington, Vermont, believed that Flair should have been ranked number one without question.

Flair is the greatest wrestler of modern times, wrote Bolling, *and I'm really happy you haven't fallen for the line of hype handed out by the WWF. To rank Slaughter over Flair—or anybody else—would've been a grave injustice. Flair is a true legend, while Slaughter, **The Ultimate Warrior**, Hogan, and the rest of the WWF wrestlers couldn't wrestle their way out of a paper bag. Hopefully, now that Hogan has the title back, you won't go crazy and rate him over Flair.*



Lou Thesz

Sorry, Phil. Hogan deserves to be returned to the number-one position. His triumph over Slaughter to capture his third WWF World title at WrestleMania VII earned him the top spot, particularly in the wake of Flair's disputed match with **Tatsumi Fujinami** at the big WCW/New Japan card on March 21 in Tokyo.

Many fans believe that Fujinami should have been awarded the belt after the match, since he pinned Flair's shoulders to the mat. New Japan officials, in fact, are proclaiming Fujinami the WCW World champion. In light of the controversy, Flair falls to second place in this issue. Fujinami's strong showing has earned him a solid number-five position in this issue's Top 10.

Until next time... Have an opinion about the new champs? Want to talk about Tri-State or other organizations in our ratings? Send your mail to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o *Sports Review Wrestling*, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571. □

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